LIFE AFTER DEATH

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GANGA PRASAD UPADHYAYA

SOUTH AFRICA PRACHAR SERIES

अहम् भूमिम् अददाम् आर्याय

सार्वदेशिक आर्य्य प्रतिनिधि सभा देहली



Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya
and
His Wife Shrimati Kala Devi

LIFE AFTER DEATH



Group Photograph taken on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Natal.
(*The author is seated on the front row at the centre.*)

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LIFE AFTER DEATH

By

GANGA PRASAD UPADHYAYA

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॥ ओ३म् ॥

पं० गंगाप्रसाद उपाध्याय एम० ए०
मंत्री

सार्वदेशिक आर्य प्रतिनिधि सभा,
बलिदान भवन,
दिल्ली

ओ३म्

डर्बन
30.8.50

श्री मंत्री जी,
आर्य प्रतिनिधि सभा नैटाल, (दक्षिण अफ्रीका)
डर्बन,

नमस्ते

आज मेरी विदाई के अवसर पर जो आपकी सभा की ओर से 3 बजे सायंकाल सभाभवन 21 कार्लिसल स्ट्रीट (Carlisle Street) में किया गया मुझे सभा ने अपने निज उपयोग के लिये 101 पौंड की थैली भेंट की उस के लिये मैं आप का अत्यन्त आभारी हूं। मैंने इस धन का इस प्रकार उपयोग करने का निश्चय किया है कि यह धन श्रीमती आर्य प्रतिनिधि सार्वदेशिक सभा दिल्ली के कोष में जमा कर दिया जाय और उस से दक्षिण अफ्रीका की आवश्यकताओं को ध्यान में रख कर विशेष कर अंग्रेजी भाषा में तथा अन्य भाषाओं में भी वैदिक धर्म सम्बन्धी उचित साहित्य निकाला जाय। पुस्तकों का नाम "दक्षिण अफ्रीका प्रचार सीरीज़" होगा तथा सभा इनके लिये एक विद्वान् से लिखवाये और इस मूलधन से पुस्तकें छपवाने तथा बेचने, जो धन मिले हो आगे वह इसी माला की वृद्धि में लगाया जाय।

जो पुस्तकें छपें उन में प्रथम पृष्ठ पर अथवा अन्य उचित स्थान पर इस प्रकार की लिपि उद्धृत रहे जिससे इस अवसर की स्मृति बनी रहे। आशा है कि आपकी सभा तथा सार्वदेशिक सभा को यह प्रस्ताव स्वीकार होगा।

भवदीय
गंगाप्रसाद उपाध्याय

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Life After Death

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

No death is death if it leads to life. And we cannot think of death without thinking of "life" after it. Death, no doubt, means parting, parting not only with our friends, relations, material belongings and environments, but also with the closest associations such as our organs of senses and body itself. But parting with one's own self is meaningless. You can leave "all" but not "yourself". Death does not mean annihilation of self, the total cessation of one's own existence.

Death means dissolution of body—the material abode in which I lived. I *was* not body. Only I *lived* in the body. This is plain, axiomatically plain. Everybody can feel it. The body I live in consists of a number of parts which we call organs. These organs are only instruments with which I work. I say that my eye *sees*. But it is not a correct statement. The truth is that my eye does not see. It is I that see with the eye. There are many occasions on which my

eye does not see at all even when it is open and its contact with the outer world objects through light is intact. I may be busy elsewhere, handling other organs, or perhaps resting. The same holds good with other organs. They are my organs but not a part of "myself." I am indivisible.

If I lose my eye, I cannot see. But I exist. There is a desire in me to see. There is a feeling of pain or sorrow in me at my misfortune of having lost the eye. If some doctor brings my eye-sight back, I feel pleasure in having found again what I had lost. But all along, the consciousness of my being is there. The very feeling that I have lost something implies that I still exist.

When I am asleep, my organs cease to work. Or rather, I cease to take work from them. I am busy elesewhere and they are allowed a rest. When I wake up, my organs report their presence to me and I begin to assign them their duties. If immediately before my plunging into sleep, my brain had any stream of thought, as soon as I wake up, that stream begins to flow onward, i.e. onward from the point at which I left it; as if when going to sleep I ordered my brain to stop flowing and remain standing still to receive my

further orders. I was sleeping, which means that I did not non-exist.

This I, the *indivisible* I and therefore the indissoluble I is at the back of all life. While my life is a series of changeable events, there is one thing at the back of all those events, the notion that I exist. The constant use of 'I' and "mine" is very significant. It holds a lot of meaning within it. Events which appear and disappear and are separable from one another do not make life. It is 'I' , the unchangeable I, the I that connects those events like the thread in the beads of the rosary that makes life. Events come and go, but life continues, i.e., I continue, I live, I am a living being.

The events of my life warrant this notion. Every event that occurs gives me something, some sorrow, some pleasure or some experience. These sorrows, pleasures or experiences I treasure up, as if they are my earnings. They do not belong to those events. The events have passed away, they have left the earnings with me. If there had been no 'I', apart from those events, and the events themselves had been the life, the treasuring up of these earnings would have been

quite meaningless and my life would never have been what it is. I am young, I am old, I am ill, I have achieved this, I could not achieve that, I desire this, I dislike that, all those feelings have a significance only so long as I exist apart from those events and the passing away of those events does not mean the passing away of my own self.

Death, then, means the dissolution of the body only, not that of the soul. The soul will remain, as it has so long remained; it will live on, it will have life. But while other phenomena of life are ordinary, the phenomenon of death is very important, terribly important. The most common, yet the most uncommon.

On every man upon this earth,
Death cometh soon or late.

It comes. It is inevitable. But we try our best to avoid it, to avert it, to put it off to the farthest distance possible. "Long Live" is the greatest blessing. "Death overtake thee" is the greatest curse. All the departments of life,—health, commerce, government with a multitude of branches, aim at prolonging life and putting death off. But death does come. Babies die, young

boys and girls die, youths die, old persons die. Death is certain. But its time is so uncertain. It comes stealthily and may overtake one any moment.

Hence our eagerness to know what shall we be like when we are dead ? The quesion is interesting and important though abstruse. It has a close bearing on our present life. It should not be passed unnoticed as useless or chimerical. It should be tackled with all the strength of intellect at our disposal.

CHAPTER II

LIFE BEFORE BIRTH

'Life after death' is a difficult question, but its difficulty is much assuaged if we take up first the question of "life before birth", as the past is easier to handle than the future. But in this case our past is as dim as our future. There are more people in the world who believe that there is some life *after death* than those who believe that there was any life *before* our birth. Was, then, a void before our birth ? Did we exist nowhere and in no form ? This seems inconceivable. The Gita says :—

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

Neither from nothing comes something, nor nothing comes out of something. Non-existent thing cannot beget existent thing ? In fact there is no such thing as non-existent something. In the Chhandogya Upanishad the same principle has been stated : कथमसतःसजजायेत ।

"How is it possible that something may come out of nothing ?"

Ex nihil nihil sit

Suppose you just stand at a corner of your town, and see a stranger. You will naturally be tempted to ask: Who are you ? From where have you come ? Suppose the man answers :— I am nothing and I have come from nowhere ? Will you believe him ? Will you not say, "Well, have you fallen from heaven or sprung up from the earth ?" If fallen from heaven, then also it is clear that he was in heaven and he must tell you what he was there. If sprung up from within the earth, it is proved that he was within the earth and he must say what he was there. If neither of these, the whole thing is not only unintelligible but unbelievable—sheer nonsense.

Take another example. You start a school and, say, fifty students seek admission into your school. You hold an admission examination and find that they are at different levels and need be admitted into different classes. They possess different degrees of knowledge and hold different characteristics and tendencies. The one obvious inference is that before their coming to your school, they were under different environments and different kinds of trainings. If they deny this, their denial is not trustworthy. Either

they are under some spell or hallucination, or they have scanty regard for truth.

These two examples hold good in case of our births also. When we are born we bring with us certain tendencies which are quite different. Physically, mentally, morally and spiritually we are at different strata of our life. In some cases the differences are vehemently marked. In others they are rather indistinct. But differences there are. Nobody can close his eyes against them. One is dull, another intelligent ; one shrewd, another simple, one obedient, another self-willed, one arithmetic-minded, another lover of music. Those educationists who regarded minds of children as *tabula rasa*, or blank tablets, perhaps shot over the mark. They began at a wrong starting point. The brains of children are not inanimate blank tablets and it is not easy for a teacher to write anything on them with a convenient pen. The lessons which are given them are received with different degrees and types of welcome. These brains are not passive recipients of external impressions as blank sheets of paper are. Out of all the material that is given them, they select some and reject the other. This is called assimilation of knowledge.

How is this difference at the birth to be explained ? The one irresistible conclusion is that whom you call babies today had a previous life somewhere. They have come from somewhere. In that somewhere they had their existences and here they earned their tendencies. These tedencies they have brought from there. They had their pre-natal lives. Many thinkers who have been brought up under certain religious or philosophical traditions and have strong unmanageable prejudices refuse to believe in pre-birth past lives. They demand ocular proof and ocular proof is not forthcoming. It is impossible, and equally absurd is its demand. The two examples we have given above may also present the same difficulty. If you treat them one way, why not treat this case also the same way. Some explanation ought to be forth-coming and that should be compatible with the laws of thought.

Three possible explanations are offered :—

(1) The theory of Divine Will—
(2) The theory of hereditary descent.
(3) The theory of rebirth.

Let us examine each *seriatim*

CHAPTER III

DIVINE WILL

The theory of Divine will says that God creates new souls and puts them in the bodies prepared by conjugal processes of males and females. God is almighty and all-knowing. He knows best which soul to create, and under which circumstances to put it. To pry into the secret is absurd and irreverential. Suppose you are the master of a garden. You order different beds to be prepared and different flowers to be put in each bed. You know best, considering your will and perhaps considering the planned beauty of the garden, which plant should be given which place. Who can question your authority ? Is not God the Great Gardener ? Is not this universe His garden ? How can the garden be beautiful if without any distinction all beds are given the same sort of flowers ? The beauty of the universe lies in its diversity.

But this explanation hardly satisfies the human intellect. We, living beings, are not passive, inert, inanimate flowers. We have life

We have feelings. We are subject to pleasure and pain. We are conscious and we have an ability to question the why and wherefore of our existence as well as of the existence of others. The theory of Divine will is a fortuitous theory of birth. It is no explanation. It is a negation of explanation. First of all, think how Divine will works in the universe ? Is there no relation of cause and effect between two events ? Is there no fixed law in the expression of the Divine Will ? If God is the creator of the universe, I mean, different things of the universe, does not creation take place according to some fixed law ? Does Divine Will work arbitrarily? God creates clouds. Not from out of nothing. Vapour arises out of the ocean according to some principles and is changed into clouds. Elements pass from one form to another according to a fixed law. There is nothing fortuitous. You can study the law and foresee and foretell happenings, in certain cases with mathematical accuracy. Why should, then, Divine will work so arbitrarily in case of our births ? First of all, why should we be created at all? and, then, why with so different capacities? You can say that it is the Grace of God that brought you from non-existence into existence and we should sing His glory

rather than hurl so many questions at Him. True, if He had so created us that we had unalloyed happiness in our lives and there were nothing wanting. Then, this grace should have been equally distributed. But this is not the case. One child is born blind and in extremely miserable circumstances. Another under quite prosperous conditions, silver-spoon-fed. One has miserably diseased body, ceaselessly paining and hardly sustained even for a few hours. Another is born hale and hearty and lives a fairly long age. One has a mental apparatus of very low degree. Another is most intelligent. Why this invidious distinction in the distribution of grace? To attribute these differences to Divine Will or Divine Grace is to bring God into contempt or disgrace. Think of the lord of a mansion who decorates his drawing room with maimed animals, a monkey suspended to a peg with a leg cut and blood coming out of it ; a sheep with a needle pierced under nose, placed in a corner crying, a cow with her half-skull cut asunder bellowing in agony, a parrot with a knife half driven into its neck flapping its wings in extreme anguish. Will you call such a man as a graceful being ? Is it a way of beautifying one's room ? If such is the beauty of the universe, then the verdict which you will

pass against that cruel man should also be passed against the God of the universe. Let believers in the God of Grace pause and think. If there is God and we enjoy His Grace, then the explanation of these differences has to be sought not in the Divine-Will but elsewhere.

You cannot say that God thought one parents fit for one sort of progeny and another for another sort. Because it is not only parents that suffer pain or pleasure. Children too are the conscious bearers of those pains and pleasures. They are separate entities. These children are not the unconscious and inanimate possessions of their parents. They are children, not their chattels. It is evident that these children should be treated separately and the conditions of their existences before they came to these present births should be investigated.

All believers in God call Him Just. And they expect justice from each other too. The theory of promiscuous divine will leaves the question of justice quite unexplained. The analogy of the gardener and His garden falls woefully flat. In the case of a just treatment, the difference does not originate in the doer of justice but in the

objective receiver of justice. Therefore if God is just and we are born in different conditions, this difference of conditions should arise not in the will of God but in some action within ourselves. The subterfuge of 'divine will' or "almightiness of God" renders the knot still more insoluble.

CHAPTER IV

HEREDITARY DESCENT.

The absurdity of fortuitous creation and meaninglessness of arbitrary divine will were obvious to many thinkers, but some times for want of better hypothesis, and most often for want of courage to face popular prejudices, the protests were feeble and most indirect. India and the East where better and clearer ideas prevailed had unfortunately lost their places in the gallery of nations and their thoughts could not be brought to the forefront. The Moslem and Christian countries and especially the latter which occupied a dominating position in the world had somehow taken for granted that arb.trary divine-will-theory was the only theory compatible with their religious beliefs and that to think otherwise was a heresay. Many Christian writers of this age have seen the futility of this attitude and have begun to have a wider outlook. The Moslem world is too steel-framed and the least susceptible to those doubts which alone can lead to enquiry and acquisition of knowledge.

In the Christian countries it was Darwin, who in the middle of nineteenth century began

to feel the necessity of finding out the link which binds one species of animal kingdom with another. Lamarck and others had worked in this line long before Darwin and had met a terrible opposition from orthodox people. But with the growth of science, fanaticism became less and less and by the time Darwin made his appearance the world became more prepared to listen to new thoughts and shake off old prejudices.

Darwin's is the most valuable contribution towards bringing several animal species into closer kinship. His theory, the Evolution theory as it is called, is that whatever tendencies we possess are the result of the tendencies of past species which have preceded us. There is a gradual process by which the tendencies of one species of animals get rarefied in due course and are inherited by coming species. Evolutionists have taken great pains to observe closely the tendencies, habits and instincts of different species, compare them, assort them and allocate them in a definite system. Wherever links appeared missing and gaps in the system seemed to be most embarrassing efforts were made to fill those gaps by imagination. Thus this day evolution is exercising the most powerful

influence in the domain of science and most biological, psychological and sociological phenomena are explained simply on the basis of evolutionistic theories. Christianity which was once the most formidable foe of evolutionistic theories, has now laid down its arms and has thought it advisable to so modify itself as to come directly into a line with evolution.

How does the evolution theory explain the differences of tendencies which we bring with us at our births ? They say that these tendencies come to us from our forefathers, i.e., from preceding generations of man and other species. The laws of natural selection and survival of fittest and several other laws which the evolutionists have succeeded in discovering help those tendencies to filter down to us. To discuss these laws is outside the scope of this book. But suffice to say that it is a great improvement upon the old thought. It has opened new vistas for investigation. It has widened the family of man by establishing, or discovering links with other species. By this theory, the man no longer stands as a distinct, unconnected being. He is a part of a big universal kinship. It was not by accident that the body of a rabbit or a frog bore certain

resemblances with the human body. It was not by accident that the blood-thirstiness of man resembled that of a tiger or a wolf in certain respects. It was by no means an accident that certain instincts in the ape or in the chimpanzee were mostly like those of man. There has been much give-and—take between them. They belong to the same stock. The sum total of human instincts, human habits and human tendencies is the result of past earnings of our forefathers whom nature helped to treasure up these earnings and leave them for us, their descendants, as a legacy.

But there is one thing in which the theory seems halting. It has not been made clear whether these tendencies have *come down* to us, or we *have brought* them with us. Who are we ? Where were we before our birth? The scope of activities which evolutionists have prescribed for themselves does not go beyond material world. They seem to refuse to dabble with metaphysics. Their efforts are to explain everything physically. They do not want to investigate the nature of "*we*". Our "body" is all they want to examine. For them our bodies are we and our tendencies are the tendencies of our bodies. It was Alfred Russell Wallace, another great luminary in the domain

of evolutionism, a contemporary of Darwin, who took up the question of "mind" also. He thought that the working of "mind" was too subtle to be explained by physical laws. But the trend of later evolutionism took a different line and Wallace's "*mind*" was either left alone or dragged forcibly to the muddle of matter. I call it 'muddle' because inspite of long strides that evolutionism has made in recent times, new questions daily crop up and new explanations under glittering new names such as 'emergent evolution' and the like cannot solve the insoluble knots.

What are we when we are born? Mere bodies, a bundle of organised matter? And are our tendencies merely the tendencies of our bodies? Take a concrete example. Master Madan was a child of five or six. One day it was discovered that he was a great musician and could play at that tender age like a ripe musician. He had musical instincts. Before that particular date they were dormant. Now they came to be visible. Now the question is where those instincts resided. In the particles of his material body? And without any immaterial self bearing that material body? That material body was evidently a part of his mother's body as far as its

origin is concerned, and if you trace further, that of his father's body. Those parent bodies did not possess those instinct. They were never visible. And their being dormant cannot be proved. Whence did these instincts come then ? Supposing past generations earned those instincts ; what did "past generations" mean? The bodies of our forefathers whether human or others ? Or certain immaterial entities ? It has been lately hypothecated that certain tendencies remain "*dormant*" for a long time, and for some reason, they *emerge* all at once on a certain occasion. Let us grant that it is so. But where do they lie when they are in dormant condition ? The old bodies perish. Many intermediary bodies do not exhibit any sign of their existence. Why were they dormant so far and why have they now emerged ? To me it appears that the "*emergent* theory" is not an explanation but a polished name for the confession that material aspect of evolution is inadequate to explain the phenomenon of life.

Above I put the question: Do these tendencies come down to us? Or do we bring them with us? This is a very important question. Suppose I stay for some days in a town. I earn some knowledge by way of experiences. When I

leave the town and go to another place I take that knowledge with me. The knowledge is not separate from me like a packet of biscuits. It is a part and parcel of my non-material self. If I do not live in that town, that knowledge cannot be transmitted to me in a bundle. Even books comprising that knowledge cannot be passed to me unless I have a capacity to translate the paper signs into non-material experiences. Knowledge is inseparable from knower and cannot exist without the knower. We do earn experiences from our parents. But earning here means learning, i.e., we should have our contact with our parents. Besides in learning knowledge the learner plays an important part. Other factors are minor ones. Our parents are, so to speak, paths along which we journey. The real travellers are we. Of all the store of knowledge that is available during our travels, we choose that only which we like according to our liking or capacity; the rest we reject. Thus the reception of knowledge or experiences during these journeys is not a passing process but an active achievement. We assimilate our experiences. Experiences are by no means mere passive impressions, as if, on a wax tablet. The experiencing agency is the chief thing.

The chief mistake of the evolutionists appears to be that while they have taken notice of the roads and their environments they have quite ignored the real travellers. Suppose while travelling from one place to another I have to pass through a cistern full of some coloured water, say indigo, my body must be dyed. I cannot escape the action of the environment. But here dye is not everything. The thing to be dyed isa chief factor. And what the nature of the dyed object would be much depends upon the quality of the object which absorbs the colour. Cotton, silk, rayon, different fabrics will absorb the dye differently. Similarly different pupils passing through the contacts of the same teacher will acquire different degrees of lessons. And the paths which we call parents, i.e., father and mother, will colour the different travellers through those paths, i. e. children, with different experiences. The law of heredity does work, but only partially. It cannot by itself be a full explanation of the phenomenon at issue.

It is said by evolutionists that many instincts which we possess are legacies from our arboreal ancestors. That may be true. But how have those legacies come down to us ? Who has

brought those legacies to us ? The physical bodies which were born out of these ancestors' bodies could not have brought down those instincts. When I walk in a certain manner and make it my habit to walk in that manner, the habit does not reside in my legs. When I make my set signatures with my hand, the peculiarity of the strokes which is the distinctive feature of my signatures does not reside in my pen or my fingers. The abode of that characteristic is somewhere else. The limbs of the body are mere vehicles of expression. Pure physiology with parallelism between the activities of mind and body has failed to explain the phenomena. Knowledge is much more than physical impressions, much more than pure sensations.

Certain watching-capacities of watch-dogs in some sheep-rearing areas have been traced by evolutionists to the training which the past generations of those dogs received in previous times. There is nothing unreasonable in these deductions. But if our investigations go so far and not farther, there is one question that remains unsolved. Who was the recipient of the training at the outset? Who was the holder of the result of that training? And lastly who brought it down to the present

generation? Is it all a mere bodily action? Or is there any incorporeal substance behind it? We do not deny the hereditary influence. We simply question the adequacy of the explanation. The most important factor is missing. Heredity is something. It is not everything. It is just like a school wherein there are efficient teachers, first class class-rooms, adequate teaching apparatus but no students, no living learners. It is these living learners to which Wallace referred when he was making preliminary researches about the kinship between different animal species. Had the cue attracted later evolutionary researchists, many Gordian Knots which are still embarrassing the thinking world might have been solved.

One such knot is a quarrel between "heredity party" and "environment party". Admitting that our present instincts are a result of some past causes, the question is whether they have been gained from the ancestors or from environments. The protagonists of 'heredity cult' advance arguments in favour of heredity; while there is another cult which supports environment. To me it appears that both are right so far as they play a certain part, but both are wrong in claiming for themselves an exclusive credit, and totally

disowning the other factor. For me heredity and environment are simply the two branches of the same tree. Heredity is also an environment. For a traveller, everything that concerns the travel is an environment, be it a ship, a car, a carriage, or a road. The traveller does not come in contact with only one thing. Road, conveyance, climate, company, obstacles atmospheric or those arising from animal or human world, they are all environments for the traveller. What are parents after all if not paths through which we must pass. So is society. Parents are the first social unit. The physical, mental, intellectual and moral conditions of our parents are the environments through which we must pass in order to carry on our journey. And these environments cannot fail to exercise that influence over us. But the nature of this influence depends upon the response we offer. We recieve or reject this influence according to our capacity and leanings. Therefore the quarrel between 'heredity cult' and environment cult' is useless. It is based upon a misunderstanding. Both are ultimately the same. Superficially too they are supplementary to each other and both combined are inadequate. The 'traveller's factor' which is the most important factor is wanting. That must be supplied to make it a complete whole.

CHAPTER V

ETERNALITY OF SOULS

The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is that we did exist before our present births, whatever our condition and wherever our abode. And what are we? Non-material, instinct-bearing entities, which *have* bodies but which *are not* bodies. You may call them *souls*, *spirits*, or give them a separate name. Names donot matter much. In *Sanskrata* they are called *atmans* or *jivas*. They are not born with the bodies. Bodies grow round them. These souls are eternal, unborn and undying indivisible substances with a capacity to bear or hold or convey those instincts habits or tendencies. When we use the words *bear*, *hold* or *convey*, we must remember that we are using analogies from the material world. We should not carry these analogies too far. Mind does hold knowledge but not in the same way as a pot holds water. Mind has an enormous capacity to hold knowledge. And "mind" means *ultimately* souls or spirits.

Are these souls an aggregate or composition of material ingredients? If so, "soul" would be

the name only of a particular condition of this composition. The composition changes from moment to moment; some elements are added and others are eliminated. On this basis the phenommenon ofknowledge and memory will not be explainable. Knowledge warrants continuity; memory warrants constancy. They are impossible if changes are momentary and there is no permanent factor behind those changes. Then again, somewhere it is hinted that souls may not be an aggregate of material substances; they are an aggregate of certain feelings or tendencies. When I think of myself, I happen to fall upon some feeling, hunger, thirst, pain, pleasure etc. I cannot catch my 'self'. Had 'self' or, soul' been something, it could have been separately grasped and subjected to examination. But this objection is frivolous at the very surface. You see sights, but never the eye. The 'eye' 'which you see in the mirror is also a sight and not the eye itself. Yet you do not deny the existence of your eye ? Do you ? Will you ? Just as the fact of your seeing sights is a proof complete of your having the eye, just so the very fact that you have feelings of pleasure, pain, disgust, satisfaction is a strong proof of your own existence. While feeling pleasure or pain you are constantly conscious

of your own existence. The very sentence "I am happy" implies that there is 'I' and it is apart from the feelings it has. To use a physical metaphor, it is the back-ground of all feelings, the canvass on which all sorts of shades fall. Gotam, the father of Indian 'Nyaya Philosophy' has defined the soul as something in which pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, knowledge and will subsist. You may call it a tripartite function of feeling, knowing and willing; as these three functions are inseparably intertwined

Are these souls eternal ? Let us first narrow down the question. Are the souls immortal ? Or in other words, will they die ? Or not ? If souls are perishable substances, their earnings whether in the form of instincts or tendencies, must die with them and are of no avail or significance. What does it matter whether one lives one day, one year or one-hundred years ? The less the life, the less the botheration. Salvation and annihilation become synonyms. Butchers become our best priests and slaughterhouses best temples. But our very nature revolts against such an idea. Immortality is something ingrained in our nature. We feel that we shall survive. We cannot die.

There is a certain school of materialistic thought which thinks that death means not only total disruption of our body, but also the annihilation of life or soul. But this school does not obviate the necessity of living comfortable or convenient life. The old Charvak, the great exponent of Indian Materialism used to say, "Let your life be as pleasure-seeking as possible. Enjoy luxurious food even by running into debt. When the body has been reduced to ashes, there is no such thing as coming back". But I feel that Charvak has shot over the mark. He is not consistent with his beliefs. If pleasures and pains are merely passing phases and exercise no influence upon the being that undergoes those experiences, even enjoyment by running into debt becomes meaningless. A man undergoes all sorts of botherations for the sake of some future good. It is hope that carries man on. It is well said that when everything else has forsaken man, hope remains. Hope for future means continuity. Continuity means unperishableness. We can endure with different degrees of forbearance the perishableness of our belongings. But to bear or even think of our own perishing is horrible. When the body perishes, it is reduced to those elements of which it is composed. Here perishing

means decomposition, not total annihilation of everything. What will our own decomposition or destruction mean, when we are not a composed being. One indivisible and uncompounded entity cannot turn into nothing. How can something be nothing? Such a blank void is beyond conception. Therefore it is that all religions and almost all philosophies believe in the immortality of the souls. The emancipation of the soul, the highest bliss, the beautitude, is said to be a name of "life eternal" and 'eternal' here means "immortal".

But what is 'immortal' must be unborn. What begins must end. What ends must have begun. One-banked river is inconceivable. Infinite must be infinite on both sides. At one end finite and at the other end infinite is impossible. If void after death is difficult to think of, the void before birth is equally unthinkable. If a "Some thing" cannot perish into 'nothing', it could not have been 'nothing' before it came into existence. Immortality, therefore, implies unbornness. Our present life is but a point in the cycle of our existence. It had a life previous to our birth. There is an unbreakable continuity. What we call "life" is only "our contact" with one set

of physical conditions. In a circle the circumference is a continued line. It does not break anywhere. This geometrical line is made up of geometrical points. How many? It is difficult to count. They are countless, infinite. They are geometrical points—magnitude-less somethings. Similarly our lives are a sort of cyclic circumferences made up of temporal units, called moments ; how many? We do not know. Moments are temporal units. Their duration cannot be fixed. Paradoxical it may sound. But these moments are durationless like the magnitude-less geometrical-points and yet they make duration, as geometrical points make magnitudes.

Such is our life—most clear and yet most obscure. Even a fool knows it and yet it is staggering to the most wise amongst us. Ever passing and yet eternal. Neither ever born, nor ever perishable. It is why the Gita says :—

"Weapons cannot cut it ; fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it. Air cannot dry it". *it is imperishable, because it is unborn.*

CHAPTER VI

THE RIDDLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH

Birth and death are two opposite things. Birth is not death and death is not birth. This is how the world feels. This is how the world speaks. I have avoided the word 'contradictory' and used instead' opposite'. But contradictory natures of birth and death appear to be too patent.

But the fun of it is that birth and death are essentially the same. Coming and going are two different names of the same activity seen not from the actor's point of view but from the point of view of the on-lookers. Suppose I leave Durban for Pieter Maritzburg. That is a motion from the place where I was, to the place where I wish to be. Am I *comer* or *goer* ? The Durban friends say 'he has gone'. The Maritzburg friends say, "he has come". 'Come and go' both are appropriate. The activity is one. The modes of speechare two. When I address my Durban friends, I say, "I am going". When I address my Maritzburg friends, I say, "I am coming". Coming is not possible without going. Going is not possible

without coming. They are both the same. Similar is the case of birth and death. We are born after we have died. We die after we are born. Birth and death are two names of the same event seen from two different angles of view. What a great fun: death means birth? Yet it is no fun. It is a fact, a hard fact. The Gita says:—"Just as we put off our old coat and put on our new one, just so at the time of death we put off our old body and put on our new body." It is our death so far as our old coat is concerned. It is our birth so far as our new coat is concerned. If we do not put off our old coat, we cannot put on our new coat. If we wish to put on our new coat, we must put off the old one.

Our bodies are our coats. We change them from time to time. But these bodies are not single things. They are composed of innumerable parts. They do not remain always together. One part goes and another comes in its place. These goings and comings go on. You cannot put your finger definitely at one thing and say "this is my body". However swift you may be in putting your finger, by the time you finish your work, some part of the body has slipped away and another has come in its place. It has been cal-

culated that after a certain duration (forty days ?) all the particles of our bodies are altogether changed. This means that the body which I was wearing on 1st January is not the same on 9th February of the same year. It has totally Changed. And if death means simply the change of coats, is it not a death and a birth at the same time ? Julius Caesar is said to have remarked :—

> Cowards die many times before their death.
> The valiant never taste of death but once.

But when he uttered these words, Julius Caesar was a soldier and not a philosopher. He looked at a life from one point of view. He spoke marvellously well, but not with mathematical accuracy. It is not cowards' only who die many times. Every one dies many times.

A question is often put to me, as it is put to every one of us. How old are you ? I answer the question in accordance with the fashion of the day.

There is a stereotyped way. Consult the day of the calendar when you were born and count the days up to the date of the question. But sometimes I begin to ask myself. Is my answer correct?

What is the meaning of *my* age? The age of my *body*, of course. What *part* of my body? I say, I am seventy years old. But even taking the body as a whole it is incorrect. My teeth stand up in protest and say " You are a liar. We are hardly sixty-two or sixty-three, we, your own teeth, the teeth of your own body". My moustaches say that they are hardly fifty years old—a discrepancy of full nineteen years. The hair of my beard cry up in wonder. "seventy years! it cannot be. We are not allowed to live even two days. Every morning sees the renewal of us. Even if our past generations are taken into account, we, ancestors and descendants together are at least twenty years younger." What is, then, your age? Reader, pause and think.

Yet, I am not quite wrong. There is a fallacy which must be cleared. My body is not only a sum-total of all its members. It is something much more. Gotam in his Nyaya aphorisms has discussed this point at a great length. He says that Avayavi (अवयवी) or the whole is not an aggregate of its Avayavas (अवयव) or parts but something else. It is that invisible mould in which these parts are duly fitted. It is through that mould that my body is recognized.

My relations who have not seen me these four or five years can recognize me as the same man even though several parts of my body have undergone a change. The change is in the parts, but not in the mould. As long as the mould is the same, we call it the same body. And as long as the mould lasts, so long lasts our present life. Birth and death are the terms used in relation to this mould. It is this mould, the body, which has been compared in the Gita with the coat. Change of coats may be called birth as well as death. It is the death of the old coat and the birth of the new coat. As far as the soul is concerned, it is neither its birth, nor its death; the soul being both birthless (Aja अज) and death-less (Amara अमर) But it should not be supposed that this change of coats does not affect the soul. The wearer of the coat cannot afford to be indifferent either to the nature of coats he puts off and puts on, or to the action itself. He has to take a due notice of both. It is these coats that make a change in his life. They are not for nothing. They fulfil a necessity. The phrase 'this is a question of life and death ' is not meaningless. Life and death are the most important events of one's life. They cannot be passed over as trifles.

CHAPTER VII

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

24.00 (midnight) is the border land (border-moment) between yesterday and to-day. This is the moment you cannot catch even by imagination. Which is the dividing moment which can neither be included in yesterday, nor today ? There exists none. There is no gulf. Both the days meet some how. That is all. It is clear to a lay man. For a mathematician philosopher, it is a riddle. Where do they meet? If this 'where' is a moment which belongs to neither yesterday, nor today, separates the one from the other, then this moment will be itself divisible into two, the prior part being called yesterday and the posterior to-day. If this "where" is not a moment, i. e, no part of time, what else is it ? Such riddles are more or less conundrums more to amuse the musing people rather than solve any problem. Gotam, the father of Bhartiya Nyaya (Indian Logic) overcomes the difficulty by saying that the present is that point of time at which the calculating person is standing. It is for all practical purposes a satisfactory explanation. We, in this context, are concerned with only so

much that yesterday and to-day have no wide gulf between them. The parting line is awfully thin. It eludes grasping. Whenever we try to catch it we fail. We feel that the past is anticipating the present and the present is fast merging into the past. What is the difference between yesterday and today? If yesterday I were to be asked the question what 'today' would be, how. could have I answered it ? I had no experience of 'to-day'. I could only infer. For the inference there was sufficient material. 'Yesterday' was not the first day in my life. Several days 'passed' away. They were all 'to-days'. They all became yesterdays. In what way were they different from each other? They all appeared alike. The same dawn; the same sun-rise, the same noon, the same afternoon, the same sunset and the same night. If there was any difference, it was very slight. For instance, perhaps the 'Yesterday' was sunny and the today, cloudy. But there was no abruptness. The cloudiness of today could have been foreseen yesterday, at least by meteorological calculations. Nature abhors abruptness. It is always slopy and this slopiness is surprisingly slow. It is imperceptible. Yet foresight and forecalculation are possible. There is a proverb that "coming

events cast their shadows before". It is these shadows that enable us to peep into future. The wise always read these shadows.

The analogy of yesterday and today enables us to see the relation between our present life and the past life. The past merged into the present. The present did not come from some external region. There is a marked continuity between the two. In the Atharva-Veda, there is a significant mention of this. अहोरात्रे प्रजायेते अन्यो अन्यस्य रूपयो:। (Atharva Veda X-8-23). "Days and nights take place, the succeeding one always in the form of the preceding one". Take a detailed survey and it will be clear. Suppose today I possess X units of knowledge of mathematics. What was my condition yesterday. Either X+Y or X—Y. And in both the cases 'Y' is so small a factor that it can be neglected. No balance is so fine as to detect it. 'Y' is there. Its existence cannot be denied. But its detection is difficult. When several Y's accumulate in due course, they come into relief and even a common eye can perceive it. What is true of mathematical knowledge is also true of other knowledges. They may be knowledges concrete, or tendencies or instincts. If a man loves music today, he loved

music yesterday also ; perhaps a little less or a little more, the difference being always imperceptible.

There is one more example, which is not only plain but also amusing. You take food at 12 o' clock. You are perfectly satiated. At 8 in the evening you feel hunger. When did hunger creep into your body? Can you put your finger on the hour, minute or second at which this hunger came in ? Come it did. But only stealthily. Perhaps it began just when your last meal was over. The state of satiability and the state of hunger, apparently two opposites, were meeting together at all points. Satiability was merging into hunger. Satiability slipped away. Hunger slipped in. When? You do not know. But one thing is certain. Every preceding moment satiability must have been a little more than at the succeeding moment and hunger a little less. And the preceding moment, if consulted, would always presage the succeeding one. The record of the shadow is there. Only an eye to discern it is required.

What was our yesterday ? How can we find it out? Well, every day leaves some impressions

on the sands of time. you can trace back those impressions and find out what your past could have been, actually or at least approximately ? Just get your body examined by a medical expert. Ask him when you were born. He may not possibly give you the exact date of your birth. But for all practical purposes he will tell you when you were born. How? By simply reading those impressions on the sands of time. Each day of your life when it travelled left its footprints. Those footprints are markedly visible on your teeth, on your forehead, on your hair, on your skin, and on your other members of the body. Each little bit of your body tells the tale of its journey. The doctor examines these footprints and tells you your age.

Then you have your temperaments. These temperaments could not have been acquired in one day. Examine them bit by bit. Analyse them. Trace their development. They are the pages of the book in which your past history is written. Just look back and your yesterday will be visible to you.

CHAPTER VIII

DECLENSION AND VELOCITY

In calculating the progress of your journey, there are two determining factors, one declension and the other velocity. Suppose a train leaves the Durban Railway station at two p.m. Where will it be at 8 p. m. (i.e. after six hours.) ? The first thing that you have to find out is the direction at which the train is proceeding, the angle which the course makes with the station. The second thing is velocity or the rate per mile of its speed. These two things having been determined, the place of destination at 8 p.m. can be exactly found out. You have just to make a discount for accidental turnings if there be any. These turnings can also be foreseen with a little foresight. Thus declension and velocity are two important factors. These are the factors not only in your railway journey but in any journey whatsoever. Your life-journey is no exception. The different stages of your spiritual make-up are the different stations of your life-journey. If you just watch at your trends of thoughts and deeds and especially the thoughs, you will easily find out the declension of your life-journey. The velocity

is still easier to calculate. Take for example, the case of a boy who reads mathematics. This gives you his declension. If he is intelligent and laborious, his velocity will he considerably big. If he is dull and idle he will be comparatively slow. But the direction of his journey has been determined. It cannot be otherwise. A student of mathematics cannot be expected to know any other subject which he has not taken up. And the amount of efficiency depends upon the velocity at which he is progressing and the time he has been able to put in. Thus you foretell what kind of student he will be after two or three years. And similarly by finding the declension of your tendencies and the velocity of the progress, you can foretell what your future life would be or what your past life had been. Take a concrete example. Suppose you find a male child having effiminate tendencies. You can easily conclude that he must have been in his previous life either a female or connected with some feminine associations. Similarly a woman who for some circumstances has been forced to work warriorlike will be re-born in the next life as a strong man.

The principle of declension and velocity has one significant use in the method of training.

If the angle of the road of a railway train is a little changed, the velocity remaining the same, the direction of the motion will be changed and the destination will be thrown away much remote. Similarly the teacher should try to change the angle and much improvement can be achieved.

There is a well known proverb current in Hindu families, "*anta mata so mata*" (अन्त मता सो मता) i.e, a man gets his next birth according to the ideas he has at the time of his death. It is true because the ideas which a man possesses at the time of death are the sum total of the thoughts which he had throughout his life. They are a true index to his declension. Before his death he might have dissimulated. But death is the time when he finds himself quite uncovered. The lid which hid his secrets so far is removed and his whole life stands exposed.

CHAPTER IX

OUR BODIES

Our life is a complex phenomenon resulting from the close contact between our souls and our bodies, the word 'our' being used promiscuously for both soul and body. Really speaking we are souls and bodies are ours. As long as this contact lasts we are alive. When the contact ceases we die.

Now let us examine the nature of these bodies To say that they are material is not enough. The same matter differently composed acts differently. For example, our eyes and our tongues are made of the same material. They both receive their strength from the nourishment we eat. But they are two quite distinct organs and their functions are also different. Then again, both these organs are ours. We use them. But differently. When I use my eye, I am a seer. When I use my tongue, I am a taster. The eye does not see ; the tongue does not taste. But I who use both of them as my servants act differently. It is through my body that I contact the outside world. I see different shapes and colours. This is the

contact between me and the outside world through my eye. I hear sounds. This is the contact through ears. So on, so forth.

But then, here we are faced with a very peculiar phenomenon. Our eyes may be open and still we do not see or see only a part of the outer world. Our ears may be open and yet we do not hear or hear only a few sounds. Most of the shapes, colours, scenes, sounds and odours are left unsensed by us. How is it that when we are watching a thing very closely, we miss many sounds even when we are within their reach ?

Here there is some similarity with telephonic connections. You can not hear a particular sound unless the connection is set up. Similarly we have between ourselves and our sense organs another link called mind. The eye helps us to see a colour only when our mind is connected with the eye. When the mind turns to the ear, we hear sounds. This mind is an ever shifting, wonderfully speedy link between the soul and bodily organs. It is faster than light, faster than electricity. There is nothing faster than mind. It is why, while using our organs, we do not feel the velocity of this mind. The fastest things

are the least perceptible. When we read a book fast we use two organs, the eye and the tongue. First we see, then we speak. Both these actions of seeing and speaking appear simultaneous. But the fact is that the fast motion of the mind, changing swiftly, does not enable us to feel the interval. The interval there is. It is evident in the reading of a child. He first sees and recognises the letters. Then he speaks. There the mind is less practised.

Our scriptures speak of three bodies, all material. They are the gross body (स्थूल शरीर Sthula Sharira), the subtle body (सूक्ष्म शरीर Sukshma Sharir), and the causal body (कारण शरीर Karana Sharira). Every living being has these three bodies. It is very necessary to understand the nature and functioning of each of these bodies. Those who raise several doubts about the life after death, are mostly they who have not understood the existence or functioning of these bodies. It is not difficult to understand them. We daily use these bodies. They are ever functioning. But we do not care to know the distinction between one body and another. Several persons ask, "How is it that we do not remember anything of the past lives? Of what use is our reincarnation in the development of ourself if we do not

know, of what karmas or actions, our present life is a reward ? How do we pass at the time of our death from one body to another ? How long does it take to pass from one body to another ? What is the abode and condition of the soul in the interval ?" There are several thinkers who have been convinced of the reasonableness of the doctrine of reincarnation. But the doubts above mentioned obstruct their way. The reason is that they do not know the tripartite classification of our bodies.

The gross body is visible to all. Eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet all form the gross body. It is the subject of physiology and anatomy. The medical doctor understands it in full details. Others, too, know something about the body. But the limitations of the functions of his body are not known to many. Let us take a concrete example. I have a table before me. I see it. What does it mean ? Through light the shape and colour of the picture come to the retina and make impression there. But the eye does not retain the picture. It passes it on to the inner something. This something is not the flesh, bone or blood behind the retina. Nor is it nerves. From our skin down to nerves, they are all the

parts of our gross body. Physiology goes only so far. Not further. If you anatomise the eye or any part of the body, you will not be able to see this picture. But where has this picture gone? When we sleep and dream, this picture comes before ourself. At that time the eye is absolutely at rest. Who sees this picture then? Not the eye. What was the store-house where this picture and thousands of others of similar type were treasured? We can say that we see in dreams with our mental eyes. But this is the metaphorical use. This is no answer. Here is the proof of the existence of the "Subtle Body", the "Sukshma Sharira". The gross body passes all impressions to the subtle body. There they remain safe.

Then again, when we see a scene we feel pleasure or pain. This pleasure or pain is not the function of any part of the gross-body. The gross body may pull up the cord of the pleasure or pain. But this does not exist there. It is the subtle body through which we feel pleasure or pain. When our gross body is rendered unable to pull up this cord, even the cutting of the parts of the body is not accompanied by pleasure or pain (e.g., under chloroform).

This subtle body is material in its origin. It is a body. But its stuff is much finer, quite beyond the scope of physical examination. Dreams are a function of this body. So is knowledge. We see that if two tables are put along with two other tables, they make four. Our gross eyes have enabled us to see the chairs; but they did not tell us that they are four in number, or that two and two make four. This was the work of the subtle body.

Go further. When we are in sound sleep, this subtle body also ceases to function. We are enjoying rest. We neither see the outer world, nor we are seeing dreams. We do not even desire or detest anything. Still we are not inactive. We do feel something much finer, finer than ordinary feeling of pain and pleasure, finer than the feeling of desire or hatred; finer than the feeling of any objective knowledge. This feeling leaves its footprints on ourself. When the sound sleep is over we wake up. We say that we enjoyed sleep. We are better now than we were when we went to sleep. Sound slumber is not wakefulness. Wakefulness is not sound slumber. But the condition of the sound slumber has left its impression on our wakefulness. That is the after-

affect. This has been said to be the function of our causal body. In this causal body reside not our memories, but the quintessence of those memories, call them instincts, call them tendencies. Our gross body contacted gross objects and took their pictures or impressions. But it did not keep those impressions. It passed them on to the subtle body. There the grossness of the objects disappeared. A two-mile long road seen while awake appeared two miles long in dream too. But the grossness of the two miles was not there. There is not so much space in our mind. It cannot contain two miles long road. But now this subtle body in its turn does not pass all the sensations it recevies, to the causal body. It squeezes them out, draws their extract in the form of tendencies or instincts. The grossness of the sensations is gone. The details of memory are absent. The extracts in the form of instincts are there. This is the action of the causal body. Remember this causal body when you think of death or reincarnation. It is very important. Underline it well. You will need it in further investigation.

CHAPTER X

THE GOAL AND THE PROCESSES

Every action we do has some goal. To reach that goal a long line of actions is necessary. This we call processes. When the goal is reached, these processes are left out. For instances, we purchase biscuits in the market. The shopkeeper wraps them in a packet. The packet is the outer-covering. The goal is the putting of these biscuits into our mouth. All else is a process. When the biscuit is put into our mouth, the packet becomes useless. We throw it away.

Go further. The goal of eating biscuits is the production of energy in the body. Chewing, digesting and other actions are processes. Just as the box was a covering of the biscuits, just so, biscuits are a covering for the energy. You brought the biscuits in a packet, so that the biscuits may not be spoiled. Energy is enshrined in the biscuits so that it may not be spoiled. The goal is energy, not the biscuits. They are the processes. When the energy is obtained, the rest of the biscuits is thrown away. our body eliminates the refuse. This is the physical limit of the question.

Go further. We acquire knowledge through observation or study. This knowledge comes to us packed up in bundles of events which have as hard outer-coverings as the boxes of the biscuits. Those coverings were not our goal. They were mere processes,—necessary as processes but not after the goal is reached. Particular events lead to generalisation. We squeeze these particular events and draw quintessence out of them. We forget the details. They are the outer coverings. They should be thrown away, as soon as they have done their work. Just follow the journey which a student of mathematics covers from the day he learned numeration and notation upto the day he becomes a full-fledged mathematician. Think what he has learnt, but also calculate how much he has forgotten. Does he remember today those very details of the processes through which the primary teacher taught him the simple rule of three? Does he know the details of the sums he solved? Was it necessary to remember those details? Was it possible? Did those details not become actual refuse after a certain stage, worth being thrown-away, i.e. forgotten? Now he has acquired mathematical instincts, light essence in the form of formulae. Other things were mere processes, too gross to carry.

The things of ultimate value are these formulae and not the form of the sums which led to these.

Now collection of events is the function of our gross body. To make them rarefied and keep them in finer forms is the function of our subtle and causal bodies. These latter cannot bear the load of grosser objects. They extract the essence.

Take another allegory. You earn money, penny after penny. When you have 240 pennies, you convert them into a pound. Why? One pound is lighter to carry than 240 pennies and yet it has the same value. Whenever necessary, it can bring fresh 240 pennies. You need not carry the burden. Similarly the rarefied formulae in the form of experiences have ultimate value. They can be applicable to fresher events. These events—a long list of them must be forgotten in order to make a space in your mind for other formulae. If your pocket is full of copper pennies, it will not be able to hold further coins. Therefore you must change them into lighter pounds. The same holds good in case of knowledge. We begin with a series of events and isolated objects. We receive them respectfully and in wonder. We collect them, sort them, classify them, generalise them. And as soon as we have boiled them and drawn their extract in the form of generalisation,

we throw them as useless refuse. Ask a master of literature, how much he has forgotten ? What a lot of books he had to read, pages after pages, with patience and perseverance, underlining important words, copying out necessary material, cramming up a good deal. But does he remember all ? How much has he not forgotten ? Take the percentage. But is he poorer for that forgetfulness? If he refused to forget those all and tried to carry with him all "the load of learning lumbering in his head", he would not have been called learned. Learning does not mean those collections of words, phrases or sentences, not even language. Language too in the long run comes under the category of 'processes' and not under 'goal'. The real goal is the experiences rarefied in the form of instincts which are enshrined in our causal body, and which only matter. All else is refuse to be thrown away at different stages after their utility is over.

Remember too, by the way, that different substances yield different extracts. The extract of sugar-cane is sweet and the extract of chillies pungent. Good actions make good instincts and bad actions bad. A series of robberies makes a man robber and creates in him undesirable instincts.

A series of charities makes a man charitable and creates in him quite different instincts. As different individuals pass through different environments and diversified experiences, their causal bodies are also different.

But one thing should be rememberd. It is not easy to read causal bodies. They are so deep. It is difficult to dive down. The gross bodies are easily to be seen. But their outer appearance is often misleading. For example, a well-dressed butcher and a similarly dressed philanthropist do not appear so different as their causal bodies. Poison and nectar both can be put in identically beautiful phials. Cases can hold gold and iron rings alike. What really matters is the content and not the container. Hence the importance of causal bodies over gross bodies.

One thing more should be made clear. Our gross bodies change very rapidly. Not so our subtle bodies. Still less our causal bodies. Just as our coats we change very often, not so often our skins; similarly our skins, our flesh, our blood undergo rapid changes. Our habits cling to us firmer than our teeth or our eyes. And our instincts are more durable than our habits.

CHAPTER XI

WE MAKE OUR DESTINIES

It is a well-known saying that we make our own destinies. But what does this sentence mean ? What are 'destinies'? And how do we make them? After having read the last two or three chapters, it should be clear as to what is the destiny.

If a man has been earning money and saving it penny after penny, the treasure which he has at the end is his destiny. If a learner has been acquiring knowledge, piece after piece, the amount of knowledge he possesses in the end is his destiny. And it is also clear, how he has made it.

Similarly our actions, whether of the body, the speech or the mind go, in the long run, to make our instincts and these instincts reside in our causal bodies. These causal bodies are our destinies. We make them overselves. They are our earnings.

Any action that we do perishes as soon as it is complete. But it leaves its impression on our bodily organs as well as on our minds. For

example, when for the first time, we began to write, we took up our pen and put something on the paper or the slate. That action was over. When we repeated similar action again and again, our hand as well as our mind began to move in a particular manner. When our practice increased, it produced a habit and we could write with amazing swiftness. How did this habit grow? By constant practice. Thus we made the habit. We could have made another habit quite different from this habit. Habits are rarefied forms of activities. When these habits are very very old, they go to form instincts. When we first did an action, we did it at some pain. We had to make efforts. When a thing became a habit, it could be done easily, though with some sort of intention or consciousness. When the habits became permanent, they gave rise to instincts. A thing done instinctively needs no efforts. Upto the stage of habits we make some calculations. When the stage of instincts is reached, the question of calculation disappears. We do it automatically. Why? Because our causal body has been so moulded by our actions, that the outer bodies have to obey its behests. It is not difficult to see that our instincts do not belong to grosser bodies. They simply find their expression through them.

Thus we are the makers of our causal bodies, i.e., our destinies. These causal bodies show at what particular stage of development we are. They show our innermost nature, i.e., ourselves. It is the end of our whole life. Whatever we thought, whatever we spoke and whatever we did was all for this end. Just as every vocation or calling we follow including the minutest details goes to make our incomings or earnings, they being the end or goal of our calling, similarly every small or big thought, word or action goes to build our innermost or causal body, i.e., our destiny.

When we die, this causal body consists of all our belongings. It is ours. All else is left behind, relatives, money, house, and the gross body and the subtle body too. They were simply the means and not the end.

This destiny or causal body is the end of this life as well as the beginning of the next life. It is the pound we got in exchange of our pennies. We take it with us and embark on our fresh journey. This pound of ours begins to bring fresh pennies for us in the new life. This is the fructification of our *Karma*. Our present life is the fruit of our past *Karma* and our future life will be

the fruit of our present *Karma*. Thus the cycle of *Karma* and life goes on, just as a seed of wheat when sown and nurtured brings other seeds and these seeds in their turn produce their descendants. From seed to fruit and from fruit to seed, the cycle goes on *ad-infinitum*. From eternity to eternity.

CHAPTER XII

OUR PASSAGE ONWARD

A question has often been asked as to how and when we get admittance into our next body, after we have left the former body.

This question is due to the misapprehension that our bodies are just like our coats or houses and that when they are ready, we come into them. The metaphor of coat or building is often used (as we have done in previous chapters) to explain our relation with our bodies. But a metaphor is after all a metaphor and its metaphorical nature should never be lost sight of. All metaphors give only a partial glimpse of the case. There is no such thing as the making of a coat or a house, separately from ourselves and then, at its completion our occupying it. It is utterly wrong to say that when the new body is complete, the soul is brought in and put into it. The falsity of this notion can be easily understood if we just try to look at our body. If any one were to ask at what stage sweet syrup, is put into a sugar-cane, we would surely laugh at the question; because the sugar-cane is not like a jug or a cup into which the sweet syrup,

prepared elsewhere may be poured. The sugar-cane and the syrup both grow together. Similar is the case of the growth of a pea in the pea-pod. Look at your body also from the same angle.

Suppose you are fifty years old and your body is 5 ft. 8 inches in height and 130 lbs. weight. I ask you when you came into this body. What answer would you give? If you point to the date, which is called its day of birth, i.e., fifty years ago, it will be utterly wrong, as this body 5 ft. 8 in. in height and 130 lbs. in weight did not exist then. At that time you were a tiny creature, not so big, not so bulky. Here is to be marked the short coming of the metaphor of the house or the coat. When the builder had completed the house, or the tailor the coat, you entered into it. The house or the coat does not grow with you. But you every day feel that the body is growing with you. It is you who grow the body from inside. The body would not grow without you. If your coat is torn, you put it off and give it to the tailor for repair. If your house is decaying you can come out of it and ask your mason to repair it. But can you do the same thing with your body? Can you send the diseased body to the hospital, just as you send your coat to the laundry ? The

doctor helps your body only so long as you are in it. When you leave the body, the body ceases to grow and decomposition begins to work. Thus it is that you can never point out the moment when you entered into your body. Yesterday it was not the same body as it is today. Forty years ago it was not the same body as it is today. And yet you were all along in it. You made it grow. You did not enter the body. The body grew round you and with your help. You took in the food, assimilated it and led to the increase of the bulk of the body. Thus you made the body, of course, according to God's laws. You are responsible for the making of the body.

How does it take place ? Take the analogy of a seed. When you sow a seed into the earth, the seed begins to rot. Its outside covering begins to give way. Some people think that the seed annihilates itself before giving birth to a new tree. It is wrong. It is the mistake of observation. The fact is that the real seed was inside. What you call seed in common parlance, is the seed with its several external coats put on it by nature, to preserve it and protect it from the inclemencies of undesirable forces. When seed is put into the soil, it begins to put off its

outer coats gradually, till it is the naked seed, the real seed without any of its coverings. Now this naked seed draws its food from the earth, and thus begins the germinating process. First it is a tiny sprout, then a small plant with one or two branches and a few leaves. Then by a continunal process of addition and elimination, in a course of time it becomes a tree. Remember that the seed was never *put into* the tree. The seed *grew into* the tree.

To clear the simile in this case, the so-called seed was the gross body, the real seed the causal body. The gross body being stripped off, the real causal body into which had been treasured up all the qualities of the tree during its past life, began to grow. This seed had a previous life and now it has a future life. The future life is something like the past life. There is continuity in it. Whatever earnings the seed made in its past life, it brought with it and it will give birth to new tree similar to its past one. Thus it is that the mango seed grows into a mango tree almost of the same type, as it had in its previous life.

Now apply the case to your own death and birth. When we die, our grosser bodies are

left behind. Our causal body goes with us. Nature, as ordained and governed by God takes us to the home which we most deserve according to our stage of development. This causal body with the soul in it passes into the body of our father. As it is infinitely fine, it does not need much space for initial growth. It finds its place into the spermatozoa of the father. This is its first birth and its first home. Here it stays for sometime and takes its nourishment. While this casual body is receiving its nourishment from the body of the father and slowly developing the grosser body, the soul in this body imbibes different qualities and traits of character of the father. For example, the physical features, the mental tendencies and moral points all are inherited. It is why the child is so alike its father. The species of the future life is determined in the father's body. The foundation of the future life is laid there. It is the threshold.

Here two factors are constantly at play in an intertwined manner, subjective and objective. The subject is the soul of the child with the causal body which it has brought with itself from the past life. The objective is the sum total of all environment in the father's body; e.g., what

he eats or drinks, how he behaves, what he thinks, what his habits or tendencies are.

Here an example is necessary to clarify the point. The soul of the child with its causal body has got certain characteristics. These characteristics guide the soul in selecting from the father's characteristics only those which suit it. When I go to the bazaar and find there innumerable things, I take from out of them, only those which my proclivities demand; others I leave. Similarly here. This is why the two children of the same parents are not alike. Here the difference is due to the difference in the choosing capacities of the child-souls.

Take another allegory. You sow in the same soil two seeds, one of pumpkin and the other of melon. The seeds have different characteristics, though the soil is the same. The soil consists of the ingredients suited to both the seeds. But the pumpkin seed will not draw in those characteristics which belong to the melon seed. Nor *vice versa*. Similarly the child soul draws from the father soul only those characteristics with which it has special affinity. Thus the law of heredity works in collaboration with the law

of succession of *Karma*. The new pumpkin is the result of two things, first of the characteristics of the older seed, and secondly of the characteristic of the soil. Had there been no seed, there would have been no pumpkin. Had there been only seed and no soil, then too there could not have been the growth of the pumpkin. Thus the child that is born is the result of two things, the soul bringing with it the acquisitions of the previous life in the form of the causal body plus its acquisitions from the father's body during its stay therein.

Those who deny or ignore the existence of the child soul in the father's body or hold that the father's characteristics come down to the child merely through his spermatozoa make one very grave omission. They forget that the inert matter cannot imbibe the psychic characteristics. The spermatozoa may bring the diseased germs of the father's body, as is evident in so many diseases descending from the father to the son. But the inert and soulless spermatozoa cannot bring down intelligence or other psychic traits. If you put a microscope on the eye of a dead man, he cannot see.

Now when the causal body of the soul gets its full development in the father's body, it is

transmitted to the mother's body through sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse is nothing but a process to transmit the so far developed body of the child to the mother's womb for further development. Now the causal body is no longer a naked causal body. It has begun to grow envelopes round itself. The subtle body and the gross body have begun to grow. The child's body residing cosily in the cradle of the father's spermatozoa and now passing to the mother's womb had all the characteristics of the future body in an unmanifested or latent form, e. g., the colour of the father's eye or hair, his facial features etc. Its stay in the mother's body is long, as the gross body takes time to grow.

Here there is another mistaken notion. Some think that the foetus in the mother's body gets the soul only when it is advanced enough to quicken; and that before that, the foetus was lifeless. It is wrong. Had the foetus been lifeless or soulless, how could it so far have carried the psychic traits of the father? To remain unmanifested does not mean to non-exist. The foetus has the soul, even in its fluid state. Even the fluid in the egg has soul. The formation of the gross body in the mother's womb has different

stages in different species. For instance, the bird-mother forms in the womb only the egg-form of the body. It hatches the egg outside. It appears that nature has not made bigger space in the bird's womb. The man-mother makes the full body minus teeth. There are certain species in which even teeth are developed.

When the required stage has been reached in the mother's womb, the body comes out. This is the birth of the individual in the common parlance. This is not the real birth. You can call it social birth; i.e., the coming of the child gets recognition by the society. Our birthday does not mean the day when we begin to exist. We existed even before. It is the day when our existence has been recognized by the society. Now we enter the *formal* social life.

Thus it is clear that we do not enter the ready-made body. We make the body and grow it further and further and while in our journey, from one life to another, without breaking continuity anywhere.

The story of the passage we have narrated here will appear novel to some. But the followin g

quotations will show that much earlier than today people had this kind of belief.

(१) पुरुषे हवा अयमादितो गर्भो भवति यदेतद् रेतः । तदेतत् सर्वेभ्यो ऽङ्गेभ्यस्तेजः सभूत मात्मन्येवात्मानं बिभर्ति तद् यदा स्त्रियां सिञ्चत्यथैनज् जनयति तदस्य प्रथम जन्म । (ऐतरेय उपनिषद् अध्याय २)

That which is spermatozoa is the first pregnancy in the body of the male. Extracting from all the members of the body a quintessence, it holds in the self another self. When this is put into (the body of) the female and borne there, it is called its first birth (i.e., conception).

(Aitareya Upanishad Chapter II).

(2) Prof. Erdmann observes in connexion with Aristotle's doctrine that in the act of generation "the altogether more imperfect female supplies the matter in the menses and the male the form in the seed, which contains an ether-like breath. And as in the act of generation, so in its product also, the corporeal element is to be derived from the maternal and the psychical from the paternal element."

(Barua's Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy)

(3) Some North American Indians believed that children receive their soul from their father

and their body from their mother. (Lahontan: New voyages to North America p. 461—Canadian Indians).

(4) The Coroadas even are of opinion that a child is exclusively indebted to its father for its existence, the mother only preserving and taking care of it. (Teschauer in Anthropos IX—22).

(For these two quotations I am indebted to the History of Humam Marriage by Westermarck vol. I)

(5) Remember that children inherit not *from* their parents but rather *through* their parents.

(The mind at mischief " by Dr. William S. Sadler W. D. F. A. C. S. p. 190).

Dr. Sadler's distinction between "*from*" and 'through' is very illuminative and points very clearly to the life previous to our embarking upon our new journey through our parents.

CHAPTER XIII

IS MAN NOT AN ANIMAL ?

The division of the world into three kingdoms, i.e., mineral, vegetable and animal is very old and by universal consent, man is put under animal kingdom. But man is a vain animal. Though called a rational animal, he mostly behaves awfully irrationally. And his most unfortunate vanity expresses itself when he repudiates his kinship with animals.

The law of reincarnation of the soul (often called transmigration of the soul) inheres that a soul can pass from one animal species into another. For example, a dog can be a man and a man a lion or an ant in the next life.

Many who have traditional prejudices against this law, feel a sort of repulsion against a belief in such a law. They cry up "Was I a dog in my past life? Can I be a wolf in my future life? No, never. It is all absurd. I cannot even bear the idea of being a pig or a cat".

Many who see the validity of reasoning in favour of this belief, feel scared when they come

to this part of the doctrine. Some who cannot deny the lew of taansmigration of souls aud yet feel repulsion in the possibility of their ever turning into a dog or a sheep have consoled themselves with the belief that the process of the transmigration is only upward and never downward, i.e., from lower animals we can rise upto man, but man being the highest rung of the ladder, it is impossible to go back. They hold that nature is always progressive. Once promoted is ever promoted. Demotion is not the way of nature.

In this chapter, we propose to thrash out the whole theory. Let us begin with a quotation from the scientific memoirs of Huxley p. 471, (Vide The Natural History Review 1861 p.67-84). "Theologians and moralists, historians and poets impressed by a sense of the infinite responsibilities of mankind, awed by a just prevision of the great destinies in store for the only earthly being of practically unlimited powers, or touched by the tragic dignity of the ever-recurring struggle of human will with circumstance, have always tended to *conceive of their kind as something apart, separated by a great and impassable, from the rest of the natural world.*

On the other hand, the student of physical science, discovering as complete a system of law and order in the microcosm as in the macrocosm, incessantly lighting upon new analogies and new identities between life as manifested by man, and life in other shapes,—have no less steadily gravitated towards the opposite opinion, and as knowledge has advanced, have more and more *distinctly admitted the closeness of the bond which unites man with his humbler fellows.*"

Happily, the Indian philosophers and Indian saints always admitted this closeness of the bond which science has discoverd so late. Huxley's remarks hold good in the case of the theologians and moralists of the west only, especially Christians.

Then again :—

"Man takes his origin in an ovum similar in form, in size, and in structure to that whence the dog or the rabbit arises. The physical process which determines the development of the embryos within that ovum, the successive stages of that development, the mode in which the human foetus is nourished within the maternal organism, the process of birth, the means provided by nature

for the due supply of nutriment after birth, are essentially alike in all the three cases. Compare the bony frame work, the muscles, the great vessels, the viscera of man, the dog and the rabbit, and the demonstration of a pervading unity of plan in all three, is one of the triumphs of modern science.

Here too modern science *repeats* the experiences embodied in the vast Vedic (Hindu) literature of ancient India.

The following line of argument is worth noting:—"The most certain propositions entertained by the human physiologist, those upon which the scientific practice of the healing art depends, are largely or wholly based on the results of experiments on animals. The poison which hurts them does not save us unscathed, and we share with them two of the most terrible diseases with which mortal beings are afflicted, glanders and hydrophobia. Nor can any impartial judge doubt that the roots, as it were, of those great faculties, which confer on man his unmeasurable superiority above all other animate things are traceable far down into the animal world. The dog, the cat, and the parrot, return love for our love and hatred for our hatred. They are capable of shame and of sorrow, and though they may have

no logic, nor conscious ratiocination, no one who has watched their ways can doubt that they possess that power of rational cerebration which evolves reasonable acts from the premises furnished by the senses—a process be it observed which takes fully as large a share as conscious reason in human activity. There is a unity in psychical, as in physical plan among animated beings."

(Ibid p. 472).

This was the opinion expressed by the scientists of the last century. But recent investigations have disclosed further kinship between man and lower animals. In the "Cape Times" issue of 8th April 1950, there is the mention of a dog belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hodgkinson, Johannesburg, who "although badly hurt in a motor accident in which his master was killed while on the way to a dog show, ...it refused food even when caught by friendly strangers."

In the "Daily Dispatch" of East London dated 20th April 1950, is a news from Washington that "dogs show much more intelligence in avoiding street perils than thousands of human beings in New York, delegates were told at the annual meeting of the National Committee for Traffic

Safety here. Dr. Little, who has won renown in canine research, is making investigations."

This shows that men and animals are alike in their real selves, the difference being in outer forms and the stage of evolution. Besides all men are not alike. There are men who as individuals are much duller than most animals. If the soul of an imbecile dull savage and the soul of Darwin, Marx or Herbert Spencer are the same in species, why should the soul of that savage and that of an intelligent dog or a Chimpanzee be different? What is the difference between the soul of a mad man and that of a sagacious, well trained circus elephant ? The circus trainers have proved beyond doubt that the animals can be as much trained as men. Therefore it is clear that the animals have in essence the same souls as men. Just as souls of different men are on different planes of evolution, so are the souls of all different animals. And if it is so, there should be no difficulty in understanding that the souls of men can assume animal bodies and those of animals, human bodies.

As to the repulsiveness shown at being degraded to animal life, it is quite natural. No body wants

to go down. No king wants to become a beggar and no learned man wants to become ignorant. Sometime we are ashamed to acknowledge that we had a much humbler past, but kings do become beggars and learned men are reduced to the level of the ignorant persons when they forget their duties and degrade themselves by their behaviour. Mere wishes are of no avail. A king may detest the life of a beggar. But in this world of righteous God. everything is not according to our desires and nature does not follow our ideosyncracies. We do not desire to be sick. We laugh at the diseased and maimed. We ridicule them. But there happen cases when we too become diseased and maimed.

Sometimes man is unreasonably vain. He drinks wine and resents being called a drunkard. He steals but does not like to be called a thief. He lies but is angry when anybody calls him a liar. He is niggardly but likes to be addressed as benevolent. Similarly there are men who are wolvish in their nature, sometimes more cruel than wolves and still they think that God cannot make them wolves. They forget that by their thoughts, words and deeds they have themselves made their causal bodies wolvish. Not God,

but they themselves are the makers of their destiny. God did not ask them to be thieves and yet they became thieves. God did not ask them to be liars and yet they lied. God did notask them to be brutish and yet they become brutes. And when they have made their causal bodies or inner selves as such, how could just nature have kept them in the human bodies? Degradation came not from God but from themselves. It was inevitable.

If you just watch the characteristics of men and animals, you will find one thing striking. Different men share the traits of different animals. There are some men as brave as lion, some as ferocious as a tiger, some as cruel as a wolf, some as poisonous as a snake, some as sagacious as elephants, some as loyal as a dog, some as industrious as ants, some as busy as a bee, some as sweet as a nightingale, some as lazy as a snail, some better than all animals, some worse than the worst animal. Thus if you put human species in the centre and other species on the circumference of a circle, you will find that some member of this human species would always be nearer some other species. You can call human species as a centre, and all other species equidistant. The reason is that a man by his actions has the possibility of being

degraded to the level of a lower animal and when he has reached the last stage, it is only a step between his being a man and a lower animal. Death is that step. Just as a particular seed under particular env ronment grows into a fruit and when that fruit is ripe, falls down from the tree, to lead a separate life or give rise to another plant, similarly a soul develops in a body in a particular line and when the last stage is reached, it leaves the body, to give rise to another body according to the stage of development of the causal body. As the causal bodies of all animals are infinitely fine and have practically no material magnitude, there is no difficulty in an ant being an elephant and an elephant being an ant. The material bulk belongs to the outer form and not to the inner self.

Some persons believe in the law of transmigration, but they think that the souls expand or contract according to the bodies they occupy, as gas or light does. This is wrong. The mistake is made because they are unaware of the characteristics of the causal body. The soul is immaterial. It does not bear likeness to gas or light, which both are divisible. Indivisible entities can neither contract nor expand. They can form the nuclei of the bodies which expand or contract.

CHAPTER XIV

IS GOD JUST, RETRIBUTIVE OR MERCIFUL ?

It is said that God is merciful and his laws of nature are remedial in character. When God punishes an evil-doer, He has no selfish end in view; he is not retributive. The punishment is given to improve the evil doer. If all this is correct, then why does God send evil doers to lower lives ?

We say that God is just and justice is His mercy. An unjust mercy is a meaningless term. What is justice ? Not to budge an inch from the law. And what is law for ? For the well-being of a soul. To be for the well-being of a soul is to be merciful. Therefore to be just is to be merciful and to over-do or under-do justice is to be unmerciful. Therefore when God punishes an evil-doer, it is mercy shown to him. The different species of living beings that we find in nature are different abodes set up by merciful God to see that they contribute towards the remedial process of the souls living within them. They are so to speak, soaps to wash away sinful impressions

made on our causal bodies. The processes are slow but they are sure. Nature is always slow, never abrupt. We on account of our narrow vision cannot detect the details of the processes. We get impatient. We begin to blame nature. But nature knows in what line to proceed and how to apply the corrective.

There is one thing which nature never does and sometimes we wrongly blame her for this omission. We souls are free in our actions. Nature never deprives us of that freedom. It cannot. It is nature's mercy. If nature had deprived us of that freedom, then also we would have blamed nature and called it cruel. For instance, if it would have been a law of nature that as soon as we intend to tell a lie, some mysterious power would jump over us and pierce our tongue, we would never have lied. But then, would we have been satisfied ? Had we not blamed nature as being too tight ? Just look at your nature. Do you like to lose your freedom of action? If you lose it, there is no vice, no virtue. You become a block of stone. You become a toy in the hand of nature. It is God's mercy that He keeps your freedom intact and yet He takes corrective measures to improve your lot.

There is one thing which you lose sight of. You say, why has God made a tiger cruel when He does not like cruel deeds ? To make a tiger as such is to encourage a cruel life. Is it corrective ? But if you just remember how you yourself made your causal body, you would find the answer to your querry. The body of the tiger is your own acquisition. Nature does not help or encourage your tiger-ness. It tries to curb it by putting limitations to it. If nature had not put these limitations, there would have been only tigers in the world and no other animals. Naturalists tell us how so many small animals can save themselves from the clutches of tigers and thus tigers get less chance of practising their cruelty. It is mercy to all. If the tigers have bloody jaws, they are simply physical projections of their inner nature. If you are angry, your eyes must be red and fire-vomitting. If you are cruel, your face should look ferocious. Our inner side projects itself. But then nature sees that this outer expression does the minimum harm. I think this point was in view when the famous English poet wrote :—

There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.

Our rough-hewing and nature's shaping go on simultaneously but the latter process is so subtle and so dexterous that it outdoes the former. It is why after a certain period our sinful tendencies get weaker and weaker and we again come to human bodies to start anew and turn a new leaf.

Now remains one question. What is the difficulty if we believe that God being merciful and His laws being remedial, souls do incarnate but only in higher forms and never in lower forms? For instance, let us believe that a dog can become a man, but not a man, dog.

But the supporters of this theory lose sight of two points. First of all, they donot *posit* the eternality of souls. They appear to believe that God makes souls at their lowest stage and they go on rising up in due course according to their *Karmas*. They forget that if God makes souls, the whole law of *Karma* falls flat. The law of *Karma* rests upon the law of free will and there is no question of free will if God makes souls. We have dealt with this question in early chapters. If these souls have beginning they will not be immortal. If they are not immortal, then again

the law of *Karma* cannot stand. In the absence of law of *Karma*, the question of reincarnation of the souls or life-after death has no meaning. Then God becomes an arbitrary self-willed unprincipled entity, and this mercy or justice loses its significance. If God is such a being, we are His toys and the world is an un-moral phenomenon. I donot think if such a world would appeal to anyone except to a sceptic.

The second point is that even in case of man, we donot find him *always* going up. Going up and coming down both take place. There is ascent and there is descent. Why does God allow such a going-back? Here again the question of freedom will come into play. We see things deteriorating. This deteriorating is not imaginary but real. No soul is allowed to be stationary. Either it goes up or it goes down. If it goes down and reaches below the level of man, it must assume the body of a lower animal. Those theologians who donot believe in the law of reincarnation also believe that souls do sins and they go to hell. This permanent consignment to hell or heaven for small misdeeds or good deeds without affording any opportunity for correction is God's horrible to think of. It is not the expression of mercy, but just the negation of it.

Some animals have been observed possessing such extraordinary talents as could not have been acquired in the bodies of lower animals. This cannot be explainable except by admitting that they must have been men in their past lives and on account of their certain misdeeds, they had to be degraded. If degradation is possible within the range of human beings, it is also possible with the range of the whole of animal kingdom.

CHAPTER XV

ABSENCE OF MEMORY

If we have had a previous life before our birth why we do not remember it? And if we do not remember to what action our punishment is due, of what use is such a punishment? This question is often asked and in several cases it is a stumbling block in the belief of reincarnation.

But such a question rises when we take nature like a human court of justice. In fact we have taken the cue from there.

First of all take the question of memory. Memory is no doubt the convincing proof of the existence of a particular happening. But absence of memory is never a proof of the non-existence of a happening. This point should be well noted. For instance, if I remember that I dined with a friend two years ago, it is the most convincing proof that my friend gave me a dinner two years ago. But if I do not remember it, is it a proof that my friend never gave me a dinner? Is it not possible that I might have forgotten the event? Do we not forget a thing? If we do

forget and we forget every day, then, is not our forgetfulness a proof that a thing might have happened. If we had remembered all happenings without missing any, then surely the absence of memory would have been the proof of absence of happening also. But it is going against psychological facts.

Therefore if there are other strong proofs of the existence of a happening and memory is wanting, we must conclude that the thing happened. This is the every day phenomenon.

It is very unfair on the part of the opponents of the re-incarnation theory to bring absence of memory into question. In fact the absence of memory is neither a proof in favour, nor a proof against any happening. If there are other strong proofs in favour of the happening, it should be admitted. As there are myriads of strong proofs in favour of re-incarnation, the principle cannot be rejected only on the ground of absence of memory.

The second point is that we cannot remember everything. This forgetfulness is due to the limitedness of our mental apparatus. And it is

good that our mental apparatus is so limited. Only one thing is before our mind, all else is put aside. We remember only one thing at a time. If there be not forgetlulness, there will be no increase of knowledge. When we try to remember a particular thing, we forget others. Sometimes some undesirable memories so rush into our presence that we are sick of them and we feel the necessity of forgetting them. Reader, just think of the blessings of forgetfulness. The passing away of our dear ones if not forgotten will make our lives miserable. Over self-indulgences which had undesirable deliciousness with them and for which we did many sins would again tempt us to do those sins if they are not forgotten. How often a drunkard curses himself for his evil-habits and how often he is unable to overcome the temptation because he cannot forget it. By putting us in our future lives in quite different environments, God enables us to forget the old associations and thus avoid the temptations. The object is to keep one away from the sins and the best way is not to be told how, when and what sin we committed, but to altogether efface the whole thing from our memory, so that we may turn an altogether new leaf. If such a procedure were possible with the human courts of justice,

this was the best procedure, but as in case of human agencies it is not possible to change the minds of criminals by creating forgetfulness, the desirable reform becomes impossible. The best way of reforming a criminal is not to remind him how and when he committed the crime but to make him altogether forget it.

Take a concrete example. Suppose a person is habituated to misuse his eye and the criminal habit is deeply ingrained. The best way is not to tell him that such and such undesirable ocular enjoyment he made, but to deprive him of his eyes, so that that habit of misusing his eyes may soon forsake him.

Why do we forget our past, actions ?. We have explained this while giving an account of our subtle and causal bodies. Our subtle bodies register events and by memory people generally mean events. Memories are gross as well as fine. The Memories of events when they filter down become tendencies. These tendencies are recorded in our causal bodies and remain with us even in after lives. For instance, we have certain psychic affinities. They lie dormant in us and wake up at proper suggestions. For instance

suppose there is a Russian who has all along been using Russian language. Now the words and sentences of the Russian language are gross memories but the concepts which they convey are reduced to further finer tendencies. When he dies and take his birth in a Chinese home, he will not remember the Russian words and phrases. But his subtler tendencies are sure to wake up at proper suggestions and will find a ready expression as he makes advances in learning Chinese. If, for example, he had been a Russian mathematician, he would now be a Chinese mathematician with much greater ease. This is the case not only in our other lives but our present lives also. When we forget the exact words, as well as the circumstances in which these words were learnt up, we do remember the sense. In our present life it is the sense that matters. We express this sense in the changed sentences, though of the same language. We can express the sense in another language too if we know it. When our lives are changed, we forget the old languages and wait for the expression of the tendencies which are still with us, for the time when we have got newer vehicles. When we say that different men born bring different psychic tendencies, in fact we mean thereby the memories of the past experiences

in a finer and more generalised form. To use the old metaphor, we throw away boxes, we take the biscuits.

Thus in one sense we do remember the past deeds, i. e., the tendencies. It is only in the gross sense of events that we forget. If we are wise enough, our tendencies will tell us what good or bad deeds we committed in the past life and to what extent our joys or sorrows are due to those deeds. It is not the details of actions that matter. It is the trend of the action or type of the action which is important.

CHAPTER XVI

NATURE'S REMEDIAL INTERFERENCE

Now there is one question which deserves explanation. When we carry with us our finest experiences to our next lives we ourselves make our new bodies according to the processes described in the previous chapters, how does nature come forward with her remedies? Our faulty habits will lead to further faults as the means we have acquired are in consonance with those habits. Thus evil souls will always remain evil and the purpose of reincarnation will fail. This is the point at which the subtlety of nature's wisdom has to be properly appreciated. Pains and pleasures which constantly visit us during our lives are but the tactful interferences of nature. Mother nature is very dexterous in dealing out her kindnesses. She sees that we derive the fullest benefits of her kindnesses without losing our freedom and without being spoiled at the same time. Pleasures are the nourishment and pains the cures. Pleasures are rewards and are meant to encourage us. Pains are punishments and are meant to deter us. Our lives are full of disappointments and hopes, encouragements and

discouragements. They are not without purpose. They play an important part in our evolution and growth. Sometimes their workings are so subtle that we can not see the wisdom of them. But they all are remedial interferences of mother nature and are meant for our good. Medical doctors know that the diseases we get have all got a place in the scheme of our health. They purge the undesirable matter left in our bodies by our irregularities. Similarly pains, despairs and rebuffs that we meet in our lives are correctives and have a place in the scheme of our development. When we wish to climb the top of a mountain, we do not go up a steepy path. That is not possible. We climb in circular spiral paths, sometimes going up and sometimes going down but still gaining some points, failures and successes struggling hard between themselves and they all for our good. Certain lives are but short stations where our ship of life stays to repair the damaged parts. Some lives are just surgeries where certain diseased matter is to be eliminated. These things are not apparent to all eyes. Gross eyes look only at the surface. They do not go deeper and fail to see the wisdom of nature. But nature does her work even unknown and misunderstood.

CHAPTER XVII

EVOLUTION THEORY AND RE-INCARNATION

Before Darwin and his predecessors began their investigations in the line of Evolution Theory, Christian theologians believed that different species originated differently at the will of God and they have no kinship between them. They did not subscribe to the doctrine of re-incarnation and therefore were quite unable to explain the close similarities found between different species. It was these similarities which attracted the attention of scientists and naturalists and men like Darwin came forward with their evolution theory. Now the theory has made so much advancement that it is a domineering force in all departments of human knowledge. Mutilation of species under different laws is the topic which has a close bearing upon the subject of our present booklet. The question is how far the re-incarnation theory adjusts itself with the theory of evolution.

There is no doubt that evolution theory is a great improvement upon the view which old

theologians held. But there are certain drawbacks too which only re-incarnation can remove. For instance evolutionists refuse to examine the domain of spirit. Their evolution is only material, devoid of all non-material or spiritual references. They look at the mutilation of species only from material point of view. It is difficult to conceive that spiritless material bodies should inherit the tendencies from other purely material bodies. Suppose, for instance, that it is said that man has inherited several tendencies from his ape ancestors. The question is who is the inheritor, the soul through the body or the soulless body. The evolutionists refuse to admit the existence of soul. They want to explain everything by means of matter. The re-incarnation theory has one advantage. Between an ape and a man there is a link. That is the causal body. Through that causal body a soul can travel from a human life to the life of an ape. Similarly that causal body would be a link between any two species. Thus all species will be ultimately linked together.

The second difficulty in the evolution theory is that if all the species of animal life are arranged in order from the primitive jelly of life up to man who is on the uppermost rung of the ladder,

then as regards physical features perhaps the ape is the nearest to man. But there will be many men who will be nearer a tiger in habits than an ape. Some may be nearer to the ants. Some may be nearer to the fox. The range of mankind is so wide that one man's traits are different from another's. Yet their bodies are not so dissimilar. How is it, then, that the physical gradation of living species should not tally with the moral or mental gradation ? If evolution theory is correct then it is not possible that man may be nearer to an ape in features and nearer to in ant in some other traits. Such cross gradation will be difficult to conceive. In the re-in carnation theory, with the souls and their causal bodies, the real mutilation will be at the plane of causal bodies And once this mutilation has taken place, the further similarity in the gross bodies will be easily explained.

It is said by evolutionists that there was a time when a primitive jelly-like speck of life appeared on the surface of water. It began to develope gradually and in course of milliniums by the law of struggle of existence and the law of survival of the fittest new species sprang out of old ones, till by permutation and combination we came to the higher stages of first gorrila or ape

and then of man. They do not say how that first speck of life came to exist. Was it accidental? Such a hypothesis would set the whole theory at naught. If you say that that primary speck of life had such a potentiality that in course of time it could develope into such an evolved brain as that of Darwin, you should explain how that speck could acquire that potentiality. Every seed has potentialities of a full grown tree because that seed acquired those potentialities in the previous life of a tree. Before the seed there was a tree and before the tree there was a seed. But if you posit the appearance of a speck of life, you should go further back and trace the origin of that life. If there is a mango tree and through the seed of this mango tree another mango tree has grown, then one mango tree gives birth to another mango tree through its seed and not direct. How can one species give rise to anothers pecies, if not through a causal body with a soul in it? For the original speck of life to have such potentialities as might develope into a man or a learned man, there should be a previous life in which such potentialities were acquired.

Many conjectures which the evolutionists had to make in order to explain some difficult knots

were due simply to the fact that they wanted to abstain from positing spiritual element. It was just equivalent to explain the building of a house without any reference to the dweller. The law of reincarnation solves many riddles which the theory of evolution fails to grasp or explain.

CHAPTER XVIII

GHOSTS AND REINCARNATION

Ghosts, genii or spirits are an object of terror to many. Those who do not understand the nature of death and condition of the soul after death, think that the souls of the dead often walk on the earth, haunt the places of old associations and terrify people. Grave yards are often associated with ghosts. Often fraudulent people take advantage of popular superstition and exploit the ignorance of the people. Their tricks are often undetectible. Myriads of funny interpretations are given to justify the validity of such thoughts. People are not wanting who boldly come forward and say, "I have seen ghosts". Some persons have naively asked me a question, "How long does it take for a soul to come to the body of the father, after it has left its old body?" By this they mean to suggest that the souls can become ghosts durng this period.

What are ghosts? They say that the souls after leaving the body get free, can roam wherever they like and assume any form temporarily and appear to people in diverse forms.

We have said above that at the time of death the soul leaves the gross and subtle bodies and takes only the causal body with it. This body is the finest, absolutely invisible, having no size, no colour, no form. Therefore it is a hoax to say that anybody saw the ghost, or took a picture of the ghost in the photograph, however dim it may be. It may be some trick or any thing like this. But for a causal body to be photographed is a myth. The second point is that the soul cannot assume temporary shapes at will and then dissolve them. From the causal body to the gross body is a long process and that must be gone through according to the laws of nature. No soul can override them. The third point is that the dying soul is not the liberated soul. It has been freed from the confinement of only one body and is soon going to begin the new procedure. That procedure should be gradual and strictly in accordance with the laws. To embellish the dying soul with a power of jugglery is a gross misrepresentation. It is not at all free. It is being conveyed to another abode. When a prisoner leaves one jail and is being carried to another jail, is he free to roam wherever he likes ? There are some who claim that they can call the souls of the dead. That is also a hoax as it is not easy to believe that the souls after death become mere puppets and they

can dance attendance upon any man or obey his orders. Before their death, these souls would not obey such calls. For instance, if anybody calls me anywhere in remote places, I shall not obey his orders. How is it, then, that after dying I shall be so weak that any Tom or Harry would drag me to his planchette table and order me to answer funny questions ? Then if this soul, so called, can shake the table, why can it not shake the nerves of the ear of its wife, son or any dear one and speak to them? To say that the souls of the dead hover round their homes or graves is also absurd, as no body wishes to die. He is compelled to leave the body and go elsewhere.

Those who believe that the souls remain confined in their bodies in graves up to the day of resurrection are the most credulous. They never analyse their thoughts. First of all, the buried body is a corpse, a soulless body. Nobody would bury a living man. People bury a body when they are perfectly sure that there is no sign of the existence of the soul there. If they do not do so, they might be prosecuted by the police. Secondly the body once buried begins to decay. The elements of which this body was made shall have undergone a thousand and one transformations before the day

of resurrection. In fact there would remain nothing to rise up. God's laws cannot wait so long for dealing out justice. Suppose, for instance, that Harry dies and his body is buried. It must decay and its parts may in due course change into grass which grows on the grave. This grass is eaten by a goat and its flesh by another man John. Now Harry's body has become a part of John's body. If John dies and is buried likewise, the same process will begin anew. Where will, then, be John's soul or Harry's soul? Why deceive yourselves with such wrong notions?

There are some simple-minded Hindus who have been made to believe that between the time of one's death and rebirth there is an interval during which rice-balls or other offerings can be given for the dead. First of all, the causal bodies do not need any gross nourishment. If God sends them anywhere He also sees that His souls are well provided for? Secondly for the survivors to be anxious about them is quite useless and those who claim that they would send nourishment to these souls are in fool's paradise. Even if I like to send food to my dead mother, it is impossible. I do not know where she is. Even those priests who fatten on these ceremonies neither

know where they are nor are capable of personally going or sending gifts through some agencies.

What are ghosts then? They are nothing but fabrics of one's imagination. Sometimes they are illusions or hallucinations to which weak brains are mostly susceptible. At times they are big frauds, too, done by selfish persons to dupe others.

I am sure that if the practice of appeasing these ghosts or souls of the dead through human agencies and thus providing the latter with a source of income is given up, then the ghosts will also cease to appear. It is the fees that a juggler can obtain which encourages him to perform his jugglery. Cut the root and you cut the tree.

Some persons in order to find a pretext for their spurious trade suggest that ghosts are also a species of living beings (a kind of *yoni* or life). They have a world of their own. From there they make their raids in our world. This is also a myth. There is no proof for the existence of such a world, nor there are adequate grounds for hypothecating such an existence. If the world of the ghosts is material, then it will be just like our world. If it is aetherial, then how

can these ghosts assume gross bodies at will or dissolve them? And why should aetherial beings come to the grosser world ? It appears that the fairy tales written by some persons for amusing children, have been taken by some credulous people, as serious. Su ch mistakes are dangerous and should be avoided.

CHAPTER XIX

SOME OPINIONS

(1)

असुनीते पुनरस्मासु चक्षु :
पुनः प्राणमिह नो धेहि भोगम् " (ऋग्वेद १०–५९–६)

O God of life, give us eyes again in our future life, and again give us breath and enjoyments.
(Rig Veda X. 59-6).

(2)

पुनर्मनः पुनरायुर्म आगन्,
पुनः प्राणः पुनरात्मा म आगन् (यजुर्वेद ४–१५)

May I receive my mind again, may I get my life again, may I get again my breath ; may I get my spirit again.

(Yajur Veda IV. 15)

(3)

पुन र्मैत्विन्द्रियं पुनरात्मा,
द्रविणं ब्राह्मणं च ।
पुनरग्नयो धिष्णया,
यथास्थानं कल्पयन्तामिहैव ॥ (अथर्ववेद ७–६७–१)

May sense organs come to me in the next life, may life come to me, may wealth come to me, may divine knowledge come to me. May I again in this world set up the sacrificial fire and perform the sacrifice.

(Atharva Veda VII-67-1)

(4)

वासांसि जीर्णानियथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा—
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही । (भगवद्गीता २–२२)

Just as a man puts off old clothes and puts on new ones, similarly the soul gives up the old bodies and assumes new ones instead.

(Gita. II. 22)

(5)

यथाहान्यनुपूर्वं भवन्ति यथ ऋतव ऋतुभिर्यन्ति साधु । यथा
न पूर्वमपरो जहात्येवा धातरायूंषि कल्पयैषाम् ॥
(ऋग्वेद १०–१८–५)

Just as days follow one another, just as seasons follow seasons in good succession, just as there is no break of continuity between the preceding and the succeeding, just so, O God, make their lives.

जन्मञ्जन्मन् निहितो जातवेदा विश्वामित्रेभिरिध्यते अजस्रः ।
तस्य वयं सुमतौ यज्ञियस्यापि भद्रे सौमनसे स्याम ।।

(ऋग्वेद ३-१-२१)

The sacrificial fire established in a *Succession of past lives* is being constantly kindled by the lovers of humanity (philanthropists). Let us be within the range of the benevolent influence of that sacrificial fire.

(5)

The very same way by which the race reaches its perfection, must every individual man—one sooner, another later,—have travelled over. Have travelled over in one and the same life? Can he have been in one and the self same life a sensual Jew and a spiritual Christian? Can he in the self same life overtake both? Surely not that : but why should not every individual man have existed more than once upon this world?

Is this hypothesis laughable merely because it is the oldest? Because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it at once ?

Why may not even I have already performed those steps of my perfecting which bring to man only temporal punishments and rewards? And once more why not another time all those steps to perform which the views of eternal rewards so powerfully assist us? Why should I not come back as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge, fresh expertness? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back? Is this a reason against it? Or because I forget that I have been already here? Happy is it for me that I do forget. The recollection of my former condition would permit me to make a bad use of the present. And that which even I forget now is that necessarily forgotten for ever?

Or is it a reason against the hypothesis that so much time would have been lost to me? Lost? And how much, then, should I miss? Is not a whole eternity mine?

(The closing words in Lessing's Last contribution to Literature)

(6)

I cannot get rid of the thought that I died before I was born.

(Lichtenberg)

(7)

The metampsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can harkento. What resists this belief is Judaism together with the two religions which have sprung from it, because they teach the creation of man out of nothing and they have the hard task of linking on to this belief an endless existence a *parte post*. They certainly have succeeded with fire and sword in driving out of Europe and a part of Asia that consoling primitive belief of mankind; it is still doubtful for how long. Yet how difficult it was is shown by the oldest church histories. Most of the heretics were attached to this belief. For example Simonists, Basilidiams, Valentines, Marcionists, Gnostics and Manicheans. The Jews themselves have in part fallen into it, as Tertullian and Justinus, inform us. In the Talmud it is related that Abel's soul pased into the body of Seth and then into that of Moses. Even the passage of the Bible, Matthew XVI-13-15 only obtanis a rational meaning if we understand it as spoken under the assumption of the dogma of metempsychosis.
(S. Chopenhauer: "The world as will and Idea")

(8)

Oft in my brain does that strange fancy roll,

Which makes the present (While the flesh does last)
Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,
Mixed with such feelings as perplex the soul.
Self questioned in her sleep and some have said,
We lived, ere yet in this robe of flesh we wore.
(Coleridge: on a Homeward Journey)

(9)

Souls cannot die, they have a former home,
And in new bodies dwell and from them roam,
Nothing can perish, all things change below.
For spirits through all forms may come and go.
(Ovid's "Metemorphosis"—Drydent's translation).

(10)

No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before.

(Walt Whitman : Leaves of grass)

(11)

This old belief has been held all round the world and was spread in the remote antiquity to such an extent that a learned English churchman has declared it to be fatherless, motherless and without genealogy.

(Ohry's "Du Nirvana Indians")

(12)

Although few Christians now seem to believe in the pre-existence of the soul, the doctrine is held even at the present day by no less than 600,000,000 human beings who also, as a necessary corollary, believe in the doctrine of re-incarnation and successive lives.

The doctrine was adopted by Plato himself, who embodied it even in some of his latest works. In his views the number of souls was fixed; birth was therefore never the creation of the soul, but only the transmigration from one body to another. Plato's acceptance of the doctrine is quite characteristic of his sympathy with popular beliefs and his desire to incorporate them in a purified form in his system. "The doctrine was also held by certain early Christian sects, and it is a part of the creed of modern theosophy."

At first sight there seems to be no reason why those who undertake to prove that we shall survive this life should deny the hypothesis of a former existence. The only explanation seems to be that in modern western thought the great support of the belief in immortality has been the Christian Religion, and any form of religious

belief not supported by that religion would not be considered of importance. *Yet there seems to be nothing in the hypothesis of pre-existence in compatible with any of the dogmas which are generally adopted as fundamental to Christianity.*

If our existence began at some point in time, is it not rational to assume that that existence will end at some point in time? But if we are to continue to exist eternally, is it irrational to assume that we must already have existed eternally?

"Clearly a life which stretched on indefinitely without death would in many respects be fundamentally different from our present lives. Any attempt to imagine how our present lives would be transformed if neither we ourselves nor our fellow men had any chance of death will make this clear.

If we end our present life in a state of imperfection, as we must, it is not illogical to assume that there remains a further improvement and advance to be made in the next life, and that future death can only be regarded as improbable when at last we have reached absolute perfection. The natural inference, therefore, is that this life

will be followed *by others like it*, each separated from its predecessor and successor by death and re-birth, otherwise we shall have to fall back upon the hypothesis that a process of development begun in a single life bounded by death would be continued as an indefinitely long life not divided by birth and death at all. And to suppose, without any reason, such a change from the order of our present experience seems impossible to justify.

("Theology and Religion" by Westaway pp. 390—391)

APPENDIX

The Arya Samaj and the International Aryan League

THE ARYA SAMAJ

"Arya Samaj" is a Śanskrta compound of two words '*arya*' and '*samaja*'. 'Arya' means a righteous man, high-souled, a man possessed of noble qualities. In common parlance '*arya*' is a rough synonym of 'gentleman'. In ancient Sanskrta literature '*arya*' was the most honourable term with which you could accost another person. *Samaja* means a society or organisation. Thus 'Arya Samaj means a society of persons who mean to be good and to make others good.

So much about the etymology of the word. Technically speaking, the Arya Samaj is an organisation founded in 1875 by Swami Dayanand with the following ten principles :—

1. Of all true knowledge and whatever is known from knowledge, the Primary Cause is God.

2. God is an embodiment of truth, intelligence and bliss, and one without form, all-powerful, just, kind, unborn, infinite, unchangeable, beginningless, incomparable, support of all, lord of all, all-pervading, omniscient, undeteriorable, immortal, fearless, eternal, holy and the Creater of the Universe. He alone is worthy of worship.

3. The Vedas are the books of all true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of all Aryas to read them, to teach them, to hear them and to preach them.

4. We should be ever ready to accept truth and renounce untruth.

5. Everything should be done according to Dharma, that is, after considering what is truth and what is untruth.

6. The chief object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, *i.e.*, to make physical, spiritual and social improvement.

7. We should treat all with love, and justice according to their deserts.

8. We should dispel ignorance and diffuse knowledge.

9. Nobody should remain contented with his personal progress. One should count the progress of all as one's own.

10. Every one should consider oneself as bound in obeying social and all-benefiting rules but every one is free in matters pertaining to individual well-being.

The first two principles indicate that the Arya Samaj is first *a religious* movement, secondly, *a theistic* movement and thirdly a *monotheistic* movement.

The third principle shows that the Vedas are its religious scriptures, that is, it has doctrinal connection with the old scriptures of the Aryas[2]. Principles 4 and 5 emphasize not only a regard for truth but a regard for the *search for truth*. They enjoin the members to remain seekers after truth for their whole life, and whenever they find that they were hitherto entertaining untruth, they should be ready to discard it. It is a question of mental attitude.

This makes the organisation *rationalistic*. How can a religious movement believing in some

revelation, be consistently rational is a question which we can not deal with here. Suffice to say that an Arya Samajist should not do anything that is irrational. The remaining five principles deal, directly or indirectly, with the duties which a man owes to other beings in this world. Religion for an Arya Samajist is not an exclusively individual affair. Nothing is isolated in the world, even the world itself is not isolated. We are a part of a greater whole and our place in this whole has to be determind and constantly kept in view in the performance of our religious duties. Religion, as referred to in these principles is something that establishes an adjustment between the whole and the part without sacrificing or under-rating the one or the other. We cannot say that the universe is only a bundle of selves and that the development of these separate selves means the development of the whole. This would be sacrificing the whole at the altar of the parts. Nor can we say that each part has, as its function, only the growth of the whole and that it has nothing individualistic apart from the interests of the whole. This would mean ignoring the part for the sake of the whole. The Arya Samaj does not subscribe to either of these two views. According to it, the truth lies somewhere between the two extremes. Religion is no doubt the concern of us

individuals. But we are not isolated beings, arbitrarily put together by some external agency. We are tied down by natural and inseparable relations and our individual well-being is not at all conceivable, much less realisable, except through the well being of others.

THE SCRIPTURES OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

The most sacred scriptures of the Arya Samaj are the four Vedas, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda.

Swami Dayanand the founder of the Arya Samaj has written several books to elucidate the tenets of the Vedic Religion of which the most noteworthy are the following :—

(*a*) His commentary on the Rig Veda upto the 62 Hymn of the Mandala VII, the remaining being left unfinished.

(*b*) His commentary on the Yajur Veda.

(*c*) The Intruduction to the commentary to the Rig Veda etc., which is a fairly big book, discussing the principles of interpreting the Vedas.

(*d*) The Satyarthaprakasha (Light of Truth), his magnum opus discussing almost all points of religion.

(*e*) Sanskaravidhi, a book of rituals.

(*f*) Gokarunanidhi, denouncing slaughter of cows and other animals and emphasising the importance of non-violence.

THE WORK OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

The Arya Samaj does not believe in isolated abstract spirituality. Its duty to God includes its duty to mankind—nay to all living beings. Ever since its inception it began to take a living interest in the affairs of the society. Before the advent of the Arya Samaj, the prevailing idea among the Hindus was that the crucial test of a man's piety is his indifference to the problems of the world.

But the Arya Samajist believes that the best way of loving his Creator is to begin with the love for His creation. This strong conviction you will find pervading through all the activities of the Arya Samaj. We give here a very brief account.

(1) Social Service

The social service of the Arya Samaj began with the abolition of evil customs. Customs are national habits and they are the strongest fetters to break. A family will gladly court poverty or undergo serious troubles, but it would not dare to abolish a long-standing custom. If any body does so, he must be ready to face communal censure.

(*a*) The first evil customs which attracted the attention of early Arya Samajists were in connection with marriage, the principal ones being fire-works and dance by prostitutes and early marriage. Now those evils are all gone.

(*b*) Dowry is another evil. The bridegroom demands a fixed sum from the bride's father at the time of marriage. In certain communities this evil is very horrible. To have a daughter in the family is to constantly burn in the fire of hell. The Arya Samaj has been trying its best to uproot this evil and much has been done, though not enough.

(*c*) The next item is Social Reconstruction. The Hindu society is split up into totally unconnected castes—a congeries of independent and independable units whose one work was to emphasize their importance and to look down upon others. The fourfold organic division of the society into Brahmanas, Ksattriyas, Vaisyas and Shudras corresponding to the fourfold division of the human body into the Head, the Arms, the Thighs and the Feet, which was once the strongest point of the Vedic sociology and which made the Aryan Society so strong in the past, was totally forgotten and its place was taken by the abominable caste system which was no *system* at all. A system means that in which the parts and the whole are so organised

that they are interconnected and the growth of one is conducive to the growth of others. If such a thing does not exist, then we cannot call it a system. A collection of a goat's limbs on a butcher's shop is no *system*, though all the parts of the body are there. It was a system when the goat was alive and when the healthy growth of the mouth or the stomach meant the healthy growth of other limbs and the whole body. The old Aryan Society had a *varna*-system when the Brahmana, the Kshattriya, the Vaisya and the Shudra were the inter-linked and inter-dependent parts of the Aryan society and when each regarded the well-being of the whole as the well-being of itself. Swami Dayanand found that the prevailing caste-system of the Hindus was a degenerated and mutilated successor of once the pure *varna* system. Swami Dayanand said, "This should go. If one is not a Brahmana by fitness, one should be made to lose one's prestige and respect and seek one's level." Swami Daya Nand quoted for his support from the Vedas and other scriptures. He did not say that *varnas* are useless; every society required some classfication and the *varna* classification is the best. But this should not be based upon birth. The son of a Brahman can be a Kshattriya, or Vaishya or even Shudra. And a Shudra's son may be a Brahmana.

The Arya Samaj was the first to strike at the root of untouchability and it is trying hard to uproot the evil.

(*d*) Foreign Travels

Orthodox Hinduism looked upon the crossing of Sea as a sin. Who ever left Indian shores was supposed to be a renegade and outcaste. How these restrictions originated it is difficult to trace, for in ancient times we find Aryans very enterprising and travel-loving Swami Dayanand saw the folly of the superstition. Now Arya Samajic missionaries go to Arabia, Baghdad, Africa, America and Euorpe to preach their religion without any hitch.

(*e*) Emancipation of Women

The Hindu society in which Swami Dayanand began to work was *very* unjust towards its womanhood. I should not say that it was the *most* unjust. That would be wrong. Western critics of our civilization have often been too cruel in estimating our merits and demerits and often political motives have been their guide. Still the position of the woman in the Hindu Society is not what it was in the Vedic times. The Vedas allowed the woman a full partnership.

She was the equal half of her husband (अर्धाङ्गिनी). In theory even the Hindu society admitted it. But in practice there were many disabilities. For instance : (1) Women were not taught. (2) (2) They were not taught the Vedas. They were supposed too low for sacred studies. (3) A man could marry several wives at the same time. (4) A widower could marry any number of times, but even a child widow had to keep enforced widowhood. Swami Dayanand discussed this question fully in his works. He has quoted the Vedas and other scriptures to prove that woman has as much right to read the Vedas as man. She wears sacred thread, reads the sacred books and has a free choice in marriage. A widow's right of remarriage is the same as a widower's. Polygamy is as bad as polyandry. Purdah is a cruelty.

The Arya Samaj had to fight much when it began the work of female education. The first indigenous girls' schools were those of the Arya Samaj and even now their number is not insignificant. There is hardly any Arya Samaj to which a girls' school is not attached. The Arya Samajists were the pioneers of female education and even now they are maintaining the same position.

What woman suffragettes could not achieve in the West with all their agitation and storm, the

Arya Samaj allowed them without any hitch. Any lady can be a member of the Arya Samaj and vote. She can represent on higher bodies. Our Pratinidhi Sabhas have got important lady-members on the Working Committee. Here too the honour of beginning the work goes to the Arya Samaj.

Educational Work

The following figures tell their own tale regarding the wonderful work done by the Arya Samaj in the educational field.

Gurukulas for boys	...	30
Gurukulas for girls	...	10
Colleges (D.A.V. College)	...	15
Primary Schools for boys		192
Middle Schools	...	151
High Schools	...	200
Girls' Primary Schools	...	700
Girls' High Schools	...	10
Night Schools	...	142
Depressed Class Schools	..	322

The work done by the Arya Samaj in the edutcaional field has been appreciated by al eminent public men in India and abroad.

'The Arya Samaj' says Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, 'has done very good work in the spread of education both among boys and girls, in improving the condition of women and raising the status and standards of the depressed classes'.

("The Discovery of India" P.399)

THE INTERNATIONAL ARYAN LEAUGE.

The International Aryan League (The Sarva deshik Sabha) is the central representative body of all the Arya Samajes above 3000 in India Burma, Africa, Baghdad, Mauritius, Fiji Trinidad, South America etc. Its head office is at Delhi.

The Arya Samaj is a religious church and it has its own constitution. The ten principles of the Arya Samaj have already been given. Besides, there are bye-laws to run the administration. At least nine members make a duly constituted Arya Samaj if the members subscribe to its tenets, as will as declare their willingness to abide by the bye-laws. Every member must pay one per cent of his income to the fund of the Arya Samaj of which he is a member.

The Provincial Representative Assemblies called the Arya Pratinidhi Sabhas and affiliated to the International Aryan League are at in the following provinces:-

The Punjab, U.P., Behar, Bengal, and Assam, Rajputana, C.P., Sind, Bombay, Burma, East, Africa, South Africa, Fiji. Mauritius.

The above provincial bodies along with other Samajas of the places where a provincial representative body has not yet been formed, form a central body named the Arya Sarvadesika Sabha, Delhi, known in English as the International Aryan League. This is the representative body of all the Samajas of the world. From this constitution, which has been working well till now, it will be evident that the Arya Samaj is neither priest-ridden, nor bureaucratic in its character. From top to bottom, it is purely democratic and even the lowest among the lowest has his or her voice, directly or through representtion in the administration of the church.

Our constitution is free from invidious classification. Man and woman, high and low, poor and rich, all are alike in the eye of the constitution. It knows no distinction. It admits of no barrier.

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